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Deus Lux Mea

The Dhamma of Gotama the Buddha

AND THE

Gospel of Jesus the Christ

A Critical Inquiry into the Alleged Relations of Buddhism with Primitive Christianity

DISSERTATION FOR THE DOCTORATE IN THEOLOGY AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

By the

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TO

My Dear Mother

Preface

THE work in hand is partly the outcome of a series of lectures on Buddhism delivered by the author in the Catholic University of America. It has been written to meet a want keenly felt in the field of Christian Apologetics. The specious attempts to lay the Gospels under obligation to Buddhist teaching have shaken the faith of not a few Christians. The need of a thorough refutation is imperative. The few works in English vindicating the independent origin of Christianity against Buddhist usurpation, — all of them by Protestant writers, — excellent as they are, dwell too largely on the comparative superiority of Christian teaching, and do not enter in sufficient detail into a critical scrutiny of the alleged proofs of Buddhist influence on Christianity. It is to the latter point that the author of this little volume has given his chief care, contenting himself with a brief exposition of the inferiority of Buddhism to the religion of Christ. The detailed rejection of spurious evidence has necessitated a

more frequent reference to the writers refuted than would otherwise have been made; but in the controversial parts he has sought to be courteous and fair. The exposition of Brahmanism and Buddhism, so necessary for the proper understanding of the main thesis, will be found to have a value independently of the part that follows. While striving at a cost of much labor to attain to thoroughness and accuracy, the author has aimed to produce a work that may be read with interest and profit by those who are strangers to the subject of which it treats.

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and

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PART I

The Antecedents of Buddhism — Brahmanism

CHAPTER I

VEDIC AND BRAHMAN RITES

The Aryan invaders of India — Their gods chiefly nature-deities — Monotheistic tendencies — The sacrifices — Worship of the pitris — Rude superstitions — Transition to Brahmanism — Elaborate liturgy — Sacredness of the sacrifice — The Agni-hotra — The sacred Vedas—Sacred formulæ — Purificatory rites — Retribution of good and evil deeds, transmigration, karma — Brahman religion more than an empty formalism.

IN the history of human thought and action we find that great movements do not spring independently into being. Whether philosophical, political, economic, or religious, they are largely the outcome of what has gone before. To this rule Buddhism forms no exception. It bears an intimate relationship with the religion from which it sprang. To appreciate it rightly, one must first have some acquaintance with Brahmanism.

The beginnings of Brahmanism carry us back through the vast interval of more than three thousand years to the time when the small bands of intrepid Aryan invaders pushed their way through the mountain passes of Northern India, and, bearing down the opposition of the native tribes, took possession of the fertile valleys of the Indus and its four tributaries. There they made their home, an energetic, industrious, and progressive people, victorious in the frequent wars waged with the hostile natives, and none the less successful in the tillage of the soil and in the raising of cattle. It was a period of prosperous growth. It was likewise a period of earnest religious thought, to which the gifted bards gave expression in hymns that, like the psalms, became the favorite forms of prayer for succeeding generations.

Many were the gods that claimed their worship, the personal representatives of the striking phenomena of nature: Varuna, the all-embracing heaven, maker and lord of all things, and upholder of the moral law; the sun-god, variously known as Surya, the enemy of darkness and bringer of blessings, as Pushan, the nourisher, as Mitra, the omniscient friend of the good, and avenger of lying and deceit, as Savitar, the enlivener, arousing men to daily activity, as Vishnu, said to have measured the earth in three strides and to have given the rich pastures to mortals; the god of the air, Indra, also like Mars

the mighty god of war, who set free from the cloud-serpent Ahi (Vritra) the quickening rain, and who gave a happy issue to battles; Rudra, later known as Siva, the destroying one, and his sons the Maruts gods of the destructive thunderstorm, dreadful to evil-doers, but beneficent to the good; Agni, the fire-god, the friend and benefactor of men, dwelling on their hearths, and bearing to the gods their sacrificial prayers and offerings; Soma, the god of that mysterious plant whose inebriating juice was so dear to gods and men, warding off disease, imparting strength, and securing immortality.

These and many others of less importance were the devas, the shining ones, to whom they offered praise, sending up petitions chiefly for the good things of life, — children and cattle and health and length of days, — but not unmindful, too, of the need of craving their forgiveness for sins committed. Though thus directed to many gods, their worship was characterized by strong monotheistic tendencies. Each god to whom the worshipper addressed himself was for the time being praised as the supreme lord of all things, having the attributes of omnipotence, creative power, unlimited knowledge, and allwise providence.

There were no temples at this early period. The sacrifices were performed under the open sky. The altar was very simple, consisting of a small mound of turf, the surrounding ground being carefully cleared of grass and shrubs to guard against a possible spreading

of the fire to the surrounding fields or woods. The sacrifices were chiefly private, being offered by the head of the family, the members of which alone were supposed to profit thereby. The more complicated sacrifices, however, were performed by priests in union with the householder. Such were the soma- and the horse-sacrifices, both of which were held to be pre-eminently solemn and efficacious.

Devotion to the *pitris* (fathers), the spirits of departed ancestors, was also part of their religion. They firmly believed in the persistence of the individual after death. When a good man died, his body mingled with the earth, but his soul mounted to the realms of bliss above to live in unalloyed contentment under Yama, the first man, now lord of the dead.

But the happiness of these pitris was not altogether independent of the actions of the living. It could be greatly increased by offerings of soma, rice, and water. Hence the surviving children felt it a sacred duty to make sacrificial offerings at stated times to their departed pitris. It was the ambition of every man to have at least one son to survive him and contribute to his future happiness by abundant offerings. On the other hand, the living profited by this generosity to the dead; for the grateful pitris secured them in return health and wealth and posterity.

Nor was their religion free from the lower forms of nature-worship, and the superstitions that entered into the belief of other Aryan peoples. The cow

was held in religious reverence; worship was not withheld from serpents and trees. Magic and divination were widely practised. Formulæ abounded for healing the diseased, for driving off demons, for averting evil omens, for obtaining the object of one's desire. Witchcraft was dreaded, and recourse to ordeals was common for the detection of guilt.

Such was the religious system which the Aryans brought with them into India. It seems to have maintained much of its primitive simplicity during the period of expansive conquest, whereby the invaders made themselves masters of all Northern India from the valley of the Indus to that of the Ganges. In the long period of peace and plenty that followed, it developed little by little into the highly complicated, sacramental system known as Brahmanism.

This transformation was chiefly due to the influence of the priests or Brahmans. Owing to their excessive fondness for symbolic words and forms, the prayers and hymns became greatly multiplied, the details of ritual more and more intricate. Each kind of sacrifice came to have a liturgy proper to itself. Some of them were so elaborate as to require the service of sixteen priests. In the performance of the liturgy, the greatest care had to be observed; for it was believed the omission of a word or the mispronouncing of a syllable, or the failure to carry out any ceremonial detail would render the sacrifice void

and even dangerous. It partook of the nature of a sacramental rite, the due performance of which was sure to produce the desired effect. The sacrifice became the all-important centre around which the visible and invisible world revolved. On it the very gods of heaven depended. Through it all the legitimate wishes of the human heart could find their realization. It is true, the Brahmans did not fail to insist on generosity to the sacrificing priest as an indispensable condition of the efficacy of the sacrifice. Still it was not a mere perfunctory ceremony. It was of so sacred a character that, if performed by an unworthy priest, it was accounted sacrilegious and of no avail.[1] Nor could the individual in whose behalf a sacrifice was offered derive any benefit from it unless he was in the proper disposition. He had to prepare for it by a day of abstinence from food and conjugal intercourse, and by a purificatory bath. At the sacrifice offered at the beginning of the rainy season, the wife of the sacrificer had to confess to the officiating priest any sin of conjugal infidelity of which she might be guilty.[2]

[1] "The Bahishpavamana chant truly is a ship bound heavenwards: the priests are its spars and oars, the means of reaching the heavenly world. If there be a blameworthy one, even that one [priest] would make it sink: he makes it sink, even as one who ascends a ship that is full would make it sink. And, indeed, every sacrifice is a ship bound heavenwards: hence one should seek to keep a blameworthy [priest] away from every sacrifice." *Satapatha Brahmana*, iv. 2, 5, 10. — *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. XXVI. pp. 310–311.

[2] *Sat. Brah.* ii. 5, 2, 20. — *S. B. E.* XII. p. 396.

One form of sacrifice, however, remained in the hands of the householder; that was the simple offering of milk, butter, grain, and wood to the hearth-fire every morning and evening. This offering, called the *Agni-hotra*, was a sacred duty, to which the greatest importance was attached. It was taught that the sun would not rise were it not for the morning offering to the fire, and that the faithful performance of the morning and evening *Agni-hotra* secured a happy hereafter.

In keeping with the complicated liturgy of sacrificial worship was the multiplicity of prayers and purificatory rites that entered into the daily life of the Brahman. Here the threefold *Veda* (Wisdom) held the first place. This was the devotional lore created by the piety of earlier generations, and transmitted orally from old to young as a venerable and sacred deposit. It consisted of a collection of ancient riks or hymns in praise of the many gods, the so-called *Rig-Veda*, and of two sacrificial rituals, one known as the *Sama-Veda*, compiled from parts of the *Rig-Veda* as a song-service for the soma-sacrifice, and the other called the *Yajur-Veda*, a liturgy composed in part of ancient hymns, in part of other prayers, invocations, and benedictions, for use in the various elaborate forms of sacrifice. In course of time this threefold Veda came to be looked upon as having existed from eternity, and as having been communicated supernaturally to early man. Its preservation

was a sacred duty of the Brahmans. As writing was unknown, it had to be memorized and taught orally to others. Great merit was attached to the recitation of passages from the Veda, a privilege, however, from which all women were debarred, as well as men of low caste.[1]

Besides these, certain formulæ consisting of short extracts from the Rig-Veda were much in vogue and were held to be of great efficacy. The most important was the so-called *Savitri*, a prayer which the devout individual was careful to address every morning and evening to the sun as Savitar, the Vivifier. It ran as follows: "Let us meditate on that excellent glory of the divine Vivifier. May he enlighten our understandings." [2]

Associated with it were two sacred ejaculations of wonderful power, that served as an indispensable introduction to every important act of devotion. One was the divine monosyllable OM (aum), whose three

[1] The incantations, exorcisms, and other magic formulæ inherited by the Aryan invaders of India from their remote ancestors, seem not to have been brought together into a fixed collection till after the formation of the threefold Veda. This collection, known as the *Atharva-Veda* (Priestly Veda), was not long in winning recognition as part of the sacred canon. The latter also came in time to include the so-called *Brahmanas*, — verbose and miscellaneous explanations of Vedic texts, rites, and customs, — and the so-called *Sutras* in which the contents of the Brahmanas were greatly abridged and given an orderly arrangement. To this class of sacred literature belong the ancient law-books, of which the most famous is the metrical treatise known as the *Laws of Manu*

[2] M. Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, London, 1876. p. 20.

letters were a mystical compendium of the threefold Veda. The other consisted of the three magic words, *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, and *Svah* (Earth, Air, and Heaven). Great was the efficacy of these two formulæ when joined to the Savitri and accompanied by suppressions of breath. Devoutly recited every morning and evening by the learned Brahmans, they procured as much merit as the recitation of the Vedas. Their frequent repetition by way of penance had the effect of effacing from the soul the guilt of grievous sin.[1]

A scrupulous solicitude for ceremonial purity, surpassing even that of the Jewish Pharisee, gave rise in Brahmanism to an endless succession of purificatory rites, baths, sprinkling with water, smearing with ashes or cow-dung, sippings of water, suppressions of breath, all of them sacramental in character and efficacious for the remission of sin.[2]

The retribution of good and evil deeds both here and hereafter, so clearly expressed in the *Rig-Veda*, formed likewise part of later Brahmanic belief; but the character of that retribution came to be differently conceived. The idea of heaven as the final reward of the just remained unchanged. But the abyss of darkness to which, according to the ancient Vedic hymns, the wicked were consigned, gave place to a great variety of hells, the positive torments of which were

[1] *The Laws of Manu*, ii. 75–83; xi. 249. — *S. B. E.* XXV. pp. 44, 479.

[2] *Manu*, v. 57 ff. — *Baudhayana*, iv. 5. — *S. B. E.* XIV. pp. 323 ff.

graded to suit different kinds of crime and different degrees of guilt.[1] These harrowing torments were most vividly and circumstantially depicted. They were not, however, eternal, nor were they the only forms of retribution of evil after death. Besides these, there was recognized a long graduated scale of less severe punishments suited to sinners whose guiltiness was not great enough to deserve hell-torments, or whose debt of suffering had been sufficiently reduced by infernal punishments to allow them to pass on to a more endurable state of expiation. This was the progressive series of rebirths from those of plants, through those of less and less ignoble animals, up to that of man. Thus from the lowest hell to the highest rebirth as man, a formidable series of states of retribution was recognized, gradually diminishing in severity. According to the degree of guiltiness, King Yama, the first man, now lord and judge of the dead, determined the grade in this long series of punishments to which each sinner should be assigned. From that grade, the condemned culprit had to pass by a slow transition through the rest of the ascending series until his birth as man was once more attained.[2]

In the Vedic hymns, we find sickness and other kinds of misfortune regarded as punishments sent by the gods for the evil deeds of earlier years. Brahman-

[1] In *Manu*, iv. twenty-one different hells are distinguished. Cf. *Institutes of Vishnu*, xliii.; *S. E. B.* VII. p. 111.

[2] *Manu*, xii. 21–22, 52–58, 61–67, 73–81.

ism improved on the more ancient belief by teaching that certain kinds of sickness and deformity were due to the unexpiated misdeeds of a former existence, and hence ought to be supplemented by fitting penances.

"A twice-born man having become liable to perform a penance, be it by [the decree of] fate or by [an act] committed in a former life, must not before the penance has been performed, have intercourse with virtuous men. Some wicked men suffer a change of their [natural] appearance in consequence of crimes committed in this life, and some in consequence of those committed in a former [existence]. He who steals the gold [of a Brahman] has diseased nails; a drinker of [the spirituous liquor called] sura, black teeth; the slayer of a Brahman, consumption; the violator of a Garu's bed, a diseased skin; an informer, a foul smelling nose; a calumniator, a stinking breath, . . . a stealer of [cooked] food, dyspepsia. . . . Thus in consequence of a remnant of [the guilt of former] crimes, are born idiots, dumb, blind, deaf, and deformed men, who are all despised by the virtuous." [1]

In this way the idea of retribution was made to embrace the most rigorous and far-reaching consequences, from which, save by timely penance, there was no escape. As every good action was certain of its future recompense, so every evil action was destined to bear its fruit of misery in the next life. This law that every good and evil action would inevitably result in future weal or woe, was known as *karma* (action).

[1] *Manu*, xi. 47-53.

To the devotee of Brahmanism, however, a means was held out of securing liberation from the sad consequences of evil deeds. This means was the practice of penances and purificatory rites. Evil deserts could be offset and nullified by the merits of good works, — alms, confession, baths, suppressions of breath, recitation of the Savitri and other Vedic texts, fasts, and various kinds of self-torture, some of which were unto death.[1]

It is customary to see in these practices, which figure so largely in the sacred law-books, naught else than a perfunctory formalism. But this view scarcely does justice to Brahmanism. There is reason to believe that the consciousness of guilt for sinful conduct was keen and vivid, and that in the performance of these rites, so liable to abuse, a penitential disposition of soul was largely cultivated. A remarkable passage in the *Laws of Manu* sets forth the nature and efficacy of penance in a manner that leaves little to be desired.

"By confession, by repentance, by austerity, and by reciting [the Veda] a sinner is freed from guilt and, in case no other course is possible, by liberality.

"In proportion as a man who has done wrong, himself confesses it, even so far he is freed from guilt as a snake from its slough.

"In proportion as his heart loathes his evil deed, even so far is his body freed from that guilt.

[1] *Manu*, book xi. — *Baudhayana*, iii. 4 to iv. 8. — *S. B. E.* XIV. pp. 294–333.

"He who has committed a sin and has repented, is freed from that sin, but he is purified only by [the resolution of] ceasing [to sin and thinking] 'I will do so no more.'

"Having thus considered in his mind what results will arise from his deeds after death, let him always be good in thoughts, speech, and actions.

"He who, having either unintentionally or intentionally committed a reprehensible deed, desires to be freed from [the guilt of] it, must not commit it a second time.

"If his mind be uneasy with respect to any act, let him repeat the austerities [prescribed as a penance] for it until they fully satisfy [his conscience]."[1]

[1] *Manu*, xi. 228–234. Cf. *Baudhayana*, ii. 5, 10. — *S. B. E.* XIV. p. 176. "Let him always be sorrowing in his heart when he thinks of his sins, [let him] practise austerities and be careful; thus he will be freed from sin."

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

The caste-system — Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, Sudras — Brahmans first in dignity — Unequal distribution of privileges — Rigid caste-rules — Sudras excluded from the Vedic rites — Studentship of the three upper castes — Ceremony of initiation — Ascetic life of the student — Marriage — Rigid caste-rule for the choice of the first wife — Polygamy allowed — Low estimate of woman — Duties of the wife — The religious duties of the householder — Sraddha feasts in honor of the dead — Ascetics — Their rule of life — Their incredible mortifications — The practice of Yoga — Vows of the ascetic.

INTIMATELY bound up with the religious system of Brahmanism, so as to constitute one of its most important features, was the division of society into rigidly defined castes.

From the earliest times the people had been subject to class-distinctions. Besides the class of Kshatriyas (also called Rajanyas) or warriors, which then stood first in importance, there were recognized three others, — that of Brahmans or priests, that of Vaisyas or farmers, and last as well as least of all, the servile class of Sudras, composed chiefly of the conquered natives. Between the three first classes no hard and fast lines of separation had been drawn.

But with the development of Brahmanism there came a notable change. The four ancient divisions of society became stereotyped into fixed and exclusive castes, while at the same time the Brahmans took precedence of the warriors and assumed the first place of dignity and importance. As guardians and teachers of the sacred Veda, and as the officiating priests of the august sacrifices, they professed to be the very representatives of the gods, and hence the peers of the human race. No honors were too great for them. Their persons were inviolate. To lay hands on them was a sacrilege. Even the king had no right to do or say what was apt to stir them to anger.

The share which the various castes had in privileges was very unequal. The Brahman, as the superior of all, enjoyed the largest amount of advantage, while the despised Sudra had scarcely any rights at all. On the other hand, the penalties for wrong-doing, with but few exceptions, lay heaviest on the Sudra, and diminished by very considerable degrees as they affected the three other castes in the ascending scale.[1]

The comparative worth in which the four castes were held, is revealed by the following text from the *Laws of Manu*, "One-fourth the penance for the murder of a Brahman is prescribed as expiation for intentionally killing a Kshatriya; one-eighth for killing

[1] *Manu*, viii. 267 ff.

a Vaisya; know that it is one-sixteenth for killing a virtuous Sudra."[1]

These caste-distinctions, declared by later Brahman teaching to have existed from the beginning by right divine, were maintained by the most stringent laws. Members of the upper castes might forfeit their rank through a violation of some caste-rule, and thus sink to the degraded condition of Sudras. But no one could rise above the caste in which he was born. Moreover, to be a Brahman, or Kshatriya, or Vaisya, it was necessary that both parents should belong to the caste in question. Children of a mother married to a husband of the caste above, inherited the caste-rights of the mother only. Marriages between women of a higher and men of a lower caste gave rise to mixed castes.[2] Most contemptible of all was the Chandala, the offspring of a Sudra and a woman of the Brahman caste. The very touch of such a person was avoided by the Brahman as defiling.

Only the three upper castes had the right to know the Vedas, and to take part in the sacrifices; for Brahmanism, far from being a religion open to all, was exclusively a privilege of birth. From its saving rites the Sudra was most rigorously excluded. Woe to the Sudra who sought to gain a knowledge of the sacred Veda. "Now if he listens intentionally [to a recitation of] the Veda, his ears shall be

[1] *Manu*, xi. 127.

[2] The minor castes are all enumerated in the tenth book of *Manu*.

filled with molten tin or lac. If he recites the [Vedic] texts, his tongue shall be cut out. If he remembers them, his body shall be split in twain." [1]

It was solely in the acquisition of Vedic lore that the education of the youth consisted; and as none but a Brahman had the right to teach the Veda, the training of the youthful mind was wholly in his hands. This was one of the sources of his great influence; for in the capacity of *guru* or teacher, he had the moulding of the minds and dispositions of all who constituted the strength and mainstay of the nation. Every youth of good family had to spend some of his tender years as a student in the service of a Brahman.

The entrance into this period of studentship was marked by a most important ceremony, corresponding to the Christian rite of baptism. It was the investiture with the sacred girdle and cord. The time for this ceremony was from the eighth to the sixteenth year after conception for a Brahman, from the eleventh to the twenty-second year for a Kshatriya, and from the twelfth to the twenty-fourth year for a Vaisya. If not brought to a Brahman for this initiation before the end of the allotted period, the youth forfeited his caste-rights and was excluded from all participation in the Brahman religion.

As a preparation for the ceremony, the novice took a bath and had his head shaved. Then with the

[1] *Gautama*, xii. 4–6. — *S. B. E.* II. p. 236.

tufts of hair which served as his family mark neatly arranged, he presented himself in festive attire to his chosen Brahman teacher, bearing a new mantle, a girdle, a cord, and a staff. Sacrifice having been offered, the Brahman, standing near the fire, invested the novice with the mantle, girdle, and sacrificial cord, accompanying each act with an appropriate prayer. The novice then signified his desire to serve under him as a student, whereupon the Brahman, sprinkling the joined hands of the novice with water, and then seizing them in his own, pronounced the formulæ of initiation and adoption, and finally, touching his right shoulder, said, "A student art thou. Put on fuel. Take water. Do the service. Do not sleep in the daytime. Keep silence till the putting on of fuel. Be devoted to the teacher and study the Veda."

He was then taught the Savitri prayer, and became *dvi-ja*, or twice-born, with the right to learn the Veda and to participate in the sacrifices. "Three castes, Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaisya [are called] twice-born. Their first birth is from their mother; the second from the investiture of the sacred girdle. In that [second birth] the Savitri is the mother, but the teacher is said to be the father. They call the teacher father, because he gives instruction in the Veda." [1]

Thus prepared by a solemn consecration, the

[1] *Vasishtha*, ii. 1–4. — *S. B. E.* XIV. p. 9.

young novice applied himself to the study of the sacred Veda, learning, not from the written page, but from the spoken word of the teacher.[1] Day after day, at the appointed time, he presented himself to his teacher, and sitting upright upon the ground, with legs crossed and hands respectfully clasped, he committed a portion of the Vedic text to memory. A year or two of study sufficed, as a rule, for members of the warrior or farmer caste, of whom only a partial knowledge of the Vedas was expected. But the young Brahman had to keep up his studentship till he knew the three Vedas by heart. The very brightest could not hope to reach this degree of proficiency in less than nine years.

The student generally resided with his teacher, whom he was bound to serve with docility and reverence. Everything in his daily life was calculated to impress upon him the sacredness of the Vedas and the holiness requisite for their proper study. He began and ended the day with prayer, reciting the Savitri in honor of the rising and setting sun, and making offerings of wood to Agni (Surya) on the household fire. He had to rise before the sun, nor could he recline again in sleep till after sunset. He was allowed a morning and an evening meal, but of the simplest kind. Meat could not be eaten, nor honey, nor rich and dainty dishes. Between these

[1] The sacred books were not committed to writing till long after the art of writing became familiar to the people of India.

meals a strict fast had to be observed. He subsisted on alms, proceeding every morning and evening to the village to beg his food of worthy people who lived according to the Vedas. He was expected to observe the strictest chastity. Any violation of this virtue broke the vow of his studentship and had to be atoned for by severe penance. He was also bound to avoid music, dancing, gambling, falsehood, disrespect to superiors and to the aged, covetousness, anger, and injury to animals.[1]

The student's life was thus a life of stern moral and intellectual discipline. In it the three monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience found their realization. Coming as it did at the critical period of youth, when the will needed to be strengthened against the demands of unruly instincts, and when the mind was most susceptible to influences from without, this discipline must have helped in no small measure to develop a sturdy moral character, as well as to foster a deeply religious spirit and to cultivate a quick and retentive mind. Theirs was indeed a religious education.

A Brahmana text declares that a Brahman comes into the world burdened with three debts. To the gods, he owes the debt of sacrifice; to the rishis, or ancient bards, the debt of reciting the Vedas; to the pitris, or departed fathers, the debt of begetting sons.[2]

[1] *Manu*, ii. 177–181; xi. 119–124.

[2] *Taittiriya-Brahmana*, vi. 3, 10, 5. — Cf. *S. B. E.* XIV. p. 271–272.

Marriage was thus one of the religious duties of a twice-born man. Freed from his vow of studentship, he soon entered into the state of the householder.

Characteristic is the advice given in the *Laws of Manu* for the choice of a bride.

"A twice-born man shall marry a wife of equal caste who is endowed with auspicious [bodily] marks. . . . Let him not marry a maiden with reddish hair . . . nor one who is sickly . . . nor one who is garrulous or has red eyes. . . . Let him wed a female free from bodily defects, who has an agreeable name, the graceful gait of an elephant, a moderate quantity of hair, small teeth, and soft limbs." [1]

The rule that the bride should be of the same caste as the groom was strongly insisted upon. It was necessary for the maintenance of the castes. To become a householder through marriage with a Sudra woman was a crime and a lasting disgrace, the guiltiness of which was the greater, the higher the rank of the offender. A Brahman who would thus debase himself was destined to sink into hell.[2]

It was only of the first and principal marriage that this rule held good. It did not apply to the secondary marriages, which were the privilege of the twice-born; for as in all oriental peoples of antiquity, polygamy had the sanction of religion. A man could take an inferior wife only from a caste below his own; nor was he ordinarily allowed more than one wife from the

[1] *Manu*, iii. 4, 8, 10.

[2] *Manu*, iii. 17–19.

same caste. Hence the higher the caste, the larger the privilege. A Brahman could have four wives, one from each caste, a warrior three, a farmer two; while the Sudra was expected to content himself with one. Monogamy, however, seems to have been largely practised by the Brahmans, while the wealthy nobles maintained harems proportionate to their means.

In Brahmanism, woman's freedom of action was subject to many restrictions that did scant justice to her deserts. The wife had the right to participate with her husband in the sacrifices, but all knowledge of the Veda was withheld from her. "The nuptial ceremony," runs a text of *Manu*,[1] "is stated to be the Vedic sacrament for women [and to be] equal to the initiation; serving the husband [equivalent to] the residence in the house of the teacher; and the household duties [the same as] the daily worship of the sacred fire."

The speculative estimate of womanly worth was decidedly low. To seduce men was thought to be the instinctive impulse of women. Laziness, excessive fondness for ornament, sensuality, dishonesty, malice, heartlessness, and instability were imputed to them as dispositions inherent in their very nature. The prudent man was warned not to remain alone and unguarded with females, even his nearest relations.[2] It was laid down that a woman must never be independent, but always live in subjection, in child-

[1] *Manu*, ii. 67. [2] ii. 213–215; ix. 15.

hood to her father, in youth to her husband, in her widowhood to her sons.[1]

To her husband, especially, she owed the greatest obedience and devotion, undertaking no vow or fast without his permission. A faulty, unruly wife could be beaten. Bound by an indissoluble tie to her husband, she had to bear with him in patience and fidelity, and worship him as a god, even if he were harsh and cruel. But if she herself proved unworthy, she could be repudiated by her husband and supplanted by another. This one-sided privilege of the husband was, however, limited by certain restrictions.[2] Nor did the obligation of the wife to the husband cease at his death. She was not to marry again even if childless, but was to remain chaste and single, faithful to the memory of her departed lord, if she expected to be honored on earth and to be happy with him in heaven.[3]

But despite her many disabilities, the right of the wife to be treated as an honorable, if inferior, helpmate, was not overlooked. The sacred books did not fail to remind the householder of the sympathy, kindness, and affectionate fidelity that he owed to her whom he had received in intimate union from the very gods.[4]

[1] *Manu*, v. 147–148.

[2] v. 154–155; ix. 77–82.

[3] v. 156–157. The cruel Hindu custom known as sutteeism, by which widows were instigated to seek death on the pyres of their husbands, seems to have formed no part of early Brahmanism.

[4] iii. 55–62; ix. 45, 95, 101.

The householder, like the student, had to rise before the sun, bathe, recite the Savitri, and pour out libations of water to his departed relatives. Similar devotions were expected of him every evening. In addition, the Brahman householder had to recite devoutly every day portions of the Veda and, if a guru, communicate them to his pupil.

One of the first duties of the newly married householder was to set up the domestic fire. The maintenance and worship of the household fire secured the presence and blessing of the fire-god Agni, without which no family could prosper. It was kept always burning. Every morning and evening, offerings (Agni-hotra) were made to it of hot milk, butter, rice, barley, and sesamum.[1]

These daily offerings to the fire, together with the sacrifices of burnt offerings at every new and full moon, at the beginning of each of the three seasons, at the two harvests, and at the solstices, as well as the soma-sacrifice at the end of the year, constituted the sum of his obligations to the gods, as regards sacrificial worship.

Scarcely less important than these offerings to the gods were those he had to make to his departed relatives. Once a month, at the time of the full moon, he had to provide the *sraddha*, or sacrificial feast in honor of the dead. To this feast, which was of a joyful nature, one or more pious Brahmans and a num-

[1] *Asvalayana-Grihya-Sutra*, i. 9. — *S. B. E.* XXIX. p. 172.

ber of near relatives were invited. Great care had to be exercised in the choice of guests, for it was taught that unworthy persons would rob the sacrifice of its efficacy. Of the dead supposed to take part in this feast, the relatives up to the third generation were to derive most profit.[1]

The strong tendency to asceticism, which has asserted itself in the chief religious systems of India, seems to have taken its rise very early in Brahmanism. It found expression in the fasts preceding the great sacrifices, in the severe penances for transgressions, in the austere life exacted of the student, in the laws prescribing conjugal abstinence for the first three days after the nuptial rite and on certain specified days of every month, but, above all, in the rigorous life of solitude and privation to which not a few devoted their declining years. These were the so-called hermits and ascetics.

The majority of Brahmans remained householders to the end. But a goodly number, having paid their three debts to the gods, the pitris, and the rishis, felt called by the spirit of devotion to increase their store of merit by renouncing the comforts of home life and withdrawing to the forest to spend the rest of their days in seclusion, meditation, and severe discipline. The *Laws of Manu* recommend old age as the proper time for embracing the ascetic life. "When a householder sees his skin wrinkled and his hair white and

[1] *Manu*, iii. 122 ff.

the sons of his sons, then he may resort to the forest."[1]

This rule seems at first to have been rigidly observed; but, in the course of time, exceptions came to be made in favor of young and even unmarried men, when the influence of pantheistic speculations led to a strong prepossession for the contemplative life and to a corresponding indifference towards sacrificial rites.[2]

In withdrawing to the solitude of the forest, he could take his wife with him if he so chose. There, as a hermit, he set up a rude hut, maintained the three sacred fires, if a Brahman, and continued to perform the sacrificial rites. The morning and evening purificatory bath had to be observed. A skin or tattered garment was his only clothing. Abstaining from honey and rich foods, he had to subsist on water, fruit, grain, and herbs, giving freely of his store to those who sought his hospitality. He was allowed to lay aside food enough to last him for a year.[3]

Besides these hermits, there were the so-called ascetics, who devoted themselves to a life of even greater austerity. Renouncing the society of their wives, and incorporating the sacred fires within their bodies by inhaling the smoke, they condemned themselves to live without fire and with no shelter save

[1] *Manu*, vi. 2.

[2] Cf. *Baudhayana*, ii. 10, 17, 2–5. — *S. B. E.* XIV. p. 273.

[3] *Manu*, vi. 3–18. — *Baudh.* ii. 6, 11. — *S. B. E.* XIV. 259.

that of a spreading tree. They subsisted on roots and herbs, and on alms collected at the kitchen-door when meal-time was past and only cold victuals remained. Water was their only drink. Meat could not be eaten.

It was the rule for ascetics to eat but once a day, and then scarcely enough to keep away the pangs of hunger. "Eight mouthfuls are the meal of an ascetic," runs a sacred text, "sixteen that of a hermit, thirty-two that of a householder, an unlimited quantity for a student." [1]

The severity of life adopted by the ascetic was not so much a penitential discipline for past offences, as a means of acquiring religious merit and superhuman powers. The severer the mortification, the greater was deemed the holiness of the ascetic, the richer his future reward. It was commonly believed, too, that by extraordinary austerities one could obtain so great a mastery over the body as to become invisible at will, or to float in the air, or to move with lightning-speed to distant places. And so the more ambitious gave themselves up to a variety of self-tortures as fanatic as they were absurd. Listen, for example, to the methods recommended by the *Laws of Manu* for the practice of bodily mortification. "Let him either roll about on the ground or stand during the day on tiptoe, or let him alternately stand and sit down. In summer let him expose himself to

[1] *Vasishtha*, vi. 20. — *S. B. E.* XIV. p. 37.

the heat of five fires, during the rainy season live under the open sky, and in winter be dressed in wet clothes, thus gradually increasing the rigor of his austerities." [1]

The most common means of rigorous self-discipline was fasting. Various were the forms devised, all incredibly severe, and some of them grotesque. They would eat at every fourth meal-time, or at every eighth; or they would conform their fast to the rule of the lunar penance. Proceeding from an absolute fast on the day of the new moon, they would increase their meal daily by the addition of a single mouthful of food, till at full moon the maximum of fourteen mouthfuls was reached, and then during the days of the waning moon diminish the amount of food in a corresponding manner.[2] Others lived on water alone for wonderfully long periods of time.

But mortifications were not the only occupation of the ascetics. The practice of *yoga*, or contemplation, was also a prominent feature of their daily life. Assuming a motionless posture, and fixing their gaze steadily on some object before them, they would think intensely on an abstract subject till they lapsed into a trance and fancied they were brought into intimate union with the supreme deity, Brahman. The fruit of these contemplations was the pantheistic conception of the deity, the soul, and salvation, which gave rise to new schools of thought, and to a new class of

[1] *Manu*, vi. 22–23. [2] vi. 19, 20.

sacred literature, — the so-called *Upanishads*. The abler ascetics thus came to assume the rôle of teachers and to gather about them disciples.

In becoming an ascetic, ten vows were taken. Five were known as the greater vows, and embraced (1) avoidance of injury to all living things, (2) truthfulness, (3) respect for the property-rights of others, (4) absolute chastity, (5) liberality. The five minor vows were (1) to avoid anger, (2) to obey the guru, (3) to avoid rashness, (4) to be cleanly, (5) to observe purity in eating.[1]

[1] *Baudh.* ii. 10, 18. — *S. B. E.* XIV. p. 279.

CHAPTER III

RULES OF CONDUCT

Multiplicity of Brahman restrictions — Arbitrary and absurd rules — Food-restrictions, especially as to flesh-meat and spirituous liquors — Penalty for drinking sura — Contempt for manual labor — Occupations held to be degrading and impure — Precautions observed in drinking and walking out of regard for insect life — High standard of ethics — Insistence on forgiveness of injuries — Moral significance of thoughts clearly recognized — Choice examples of Brahman wisdom.

THE influence which Brahmanism exercised on the conduct of those who acknowledged its claims was remarkably far-reaching and comprehensive. There was not a customary action, however private, of daily life that was not regulated by prescribed rules. Innumerable restrictions, partly of the nature of religious taboos, partly prompted by strange notions of expedience and propriety, hampered freedom of action at every turn. These precepts and prohibitions were held in equal respect with the recognized ethical duties, from which they were but dimly distinguished. Nowhere, in fact, do we find a greater confusion of the laws of conduct based on the divinely established order with those

resting on inherited superstitions and ceremonial and social observances. In the sacred law-books setting forth the rules of moral and religious conduct, there is a hopeless entanglement of what is truly noble with what is trivial, an incredible mixture of gold with dross. In the most unexpected manner, the Brahman expounder of right conduct gravely links together sound moral precepts with rules of action the most silly and ludicrous; for all are of equal importance in his eyes. Here are a few examples from the *Laws of Manu*.

"Keeping his hair, nails, and beard clipped, subduing his passions by austerities, wearing white garments and [keeping himself] pure, he [*i. e.*, the householder] shall always be engaged in studying the Veda and [such acts as are] conducive to his welfare.

"Let him not step over a rope to which a calf is tied, let him not run when it rains, and let him not look at his own image in water.

"Let him pass by [a mound of] earth, a cow, an idol, a Brahman, clarified butter, honey, a cross-way, and well-known trees turning his right hand towards them." [1]

"Let him never play with dice nor himself take off his shoes, let him not eat lying in bed, nor what has been placed in his hand, nor on his seat.

"Let him eat while his feet are [yet] wet [from the ablution], but let him not go to bed with wet feet." [2]

"Let him who desires prosperity, indeed, never despise a Kshatriya, a snake, any learned Brahman, be they ever so feeble." [3]

[1] *Manu*, iv. 35, 38, 39. [2] iv. 74, 76. [3] iv. 135.

"Let him never offend the teacher who initiated him, nor him who explains the Veda, nor his father and mother, nor [any other] guru, nor cows, nor Brahmans, nor any men performing austerities. Let him avoid atheism, cavilling at the Vedas, contempt of the gods, hatred, want of modesty, pride, anger, and harshness." [1]

"Let him never bathe in tanks belonging to other men; if he bathes [in such a one], he is tainted by a portion of the guilt of him who made the tank.

"He who uses without permission a carriage, a bed, a seat, a well, a garden, or a house belonging to another [man], takes upon himself one-fourth of [the owner's] guilt." [2]

To the Christian reader, this hopeless confusion brings a constant series of surprises, producing alternately feelings of admiration and amusement, sympathy and disgust. One marvels how religious minds that possessed so clear a vision of many moral truths could be so blinded as to give their unshaken approval to a multitude of absurd and puerile superstitions.

In the matter of food, the religious restrictions were numerous and severe. Almost all kinds of fish were forbidden, as well as many kinds of land-animals, such as carnivorous and web-footed birds, village-fowls, village-pigs, camels, horses, and other one-hoofed beasts. Even the lawful kinds of fish, fowl, and meat could not be used as ordinary articles of diet. It was only on occasions of entertaining guests, and of sacrificing to the gods and pitris, that

[1] *Manu*, iv. 162, 163. [2] iv. 201, 202.

they could be eaten without sin. The animals slain on such occasions were thought to be greatly benefited, inasmuch as their immolation was rewarded by a rebirth in a higher and more blessed existence.

"Herbs, trees, cattle, birds, and [other] animals that have been destroyed for sacrifices, receive [being reborn] higher existences.

"On offering the honey-mixture [to a guest], at a sacrifice and at the rites in honor of the manes, but on these occasions only, may an animal be slain; that Manu proclaimed.

"A twice-born man who, knowing the true meaning of the Veda, slays an animal for these purposes, causes both himself and the animal to enter a most blessed state." [1]

But to slaughter an animal for ordinary purposes of consumption was accounted a grave injury, the guilt of which was shared by those who used any of its flesh as food.

"Meat can never be obtained without injury to living creatures, and injury to sentient beings is detrimental to [the attainment of] heavenly bliss; let him therefore shun [the use of] meat.

"Having well considered the [disgusting] origin of flesh and the [cruelty of] fettering and slaying corporeal beings, let him entirely abstain from eating flesh.

"He who permits [the slaughter of an animal], he who cuts it up, he who kills it, he who buys and sells [meat], he who cooks it, he who serves it up, and he who eats it, [must all be considered as] the slayers [of the animal].

[1] *Manu*, IV. 40–42.

"There is no greater sinner than that man who, though not worshipping the gods or the manes, seeks to increase [the bulk of] his own flesh by the flesh of other [beings]." [1]

Other articles of food were likewise put under the ban. It was wrong to use the milk of sheep, camels, mares, and even of cows within ten days of calving. So vigorous was the prohibition against mushrooms, onions, leeks, and garlic, that to use such food knowingly was accounted a crime involving loss of caste.

To the Brahman, all sorts of spirituous liquors were forbidden under pain of forfeiture of all caste-privileges. The very dignity of his position demanded that he should be a total abstainer. Members of the other castes were allowed the use of liquors distilled from molasses and from Madhuka flowers. But the so-called *sura*, a highly intoxicating drink distilled from ground rice, corn, and barley, was solemnly forbidden to all without distinction. To indulge in this form of beverage was held to be one of the greatest of crimes, the expiation of which called for penances appalling for their severity.

"A twice-born man who has [intentionally] drunk through delusion of mind [the spirituous liquor called] Sura, shall drink that liquor boiling hot; when his body has been completely scalded by that, he is freed from guilt;

"Or he may drink cows' urine, water, milk, clarified butter, or [liquid] cow-dung boiling hot till he dies;

[1] *Manu.* iv, 48–52.

"Or, in order to remove the guilt of drinking Sura, he may eat during a year once [a day] at night grains [of rice] or oilcake, wearing clothes made of cow-hair and his own hair in braids, and carrying [a wine cup as] a badge." [1]

No less subject to rigorous restrictions was the manner of gaining a livelihood. As in the civilizations of Greece and Rome, so too in Brahmanism, the dignity of manual industry failed of recognition. It was held to be a defilement for a Brahman or a Kshatriya to support himself by the labor of his hands. If hard pressed by lack of means, he was permitted to practise through the agency of others the occupations lawful to the Vaisya, namely, agriculture, cattle-raising, and a few kinds of trade. But the contempt in which these pursuits were held may be judged from the fact that shepherds, shopkeepers, and those who subsisted by agriculture were excluded as unworthy guests from participation in the sraddha feasts in honor of the pitris.[2]

More contemptible still were the numerous occupations that necessitated contact with substances held to be defiling, or that tainted the purity of fire and water, or that involved the slaughter of animals and the felling of trees. All who engaged in such forms of business were treated as outcasts. A Brahman could not accept food from a carpenter, a tailor, a worker in leather or metals, nor even from a physician; for they were all held to be impure.

[1] *Manu*, xi. 91-93. [2] iii. 154, 165, and 166.

"Let him never eat [food given] by intoxicated, angry, or sick [men]. . . .

"Nor the food given by a thief, a musician, a carpenter, a usurer, . . . a miser, one bound with fetters. . . .

"Nor [the food given] by a physician, a hunter, a cruel man. . . .

"Nor the food [given] by an informer, by one who habitually tells falsehoods, nor by one who sells [the rewards for] sacrifices, nor the food [given] by an actor, a tailor, or an ungrateful [man],

"By a blacksmith, a Nishada, a stage-player, a goldsmith, a basket-maker, or a dealer in weapons,

"By trainers of hunting dogs, publicans, a washerman, a dyer." [1]

The scrupulous regard for all forms of animal and vegetable life, developed by the doctrine of transmigration, gave rise to restrictive rules of conduct that bordered on the absurd. Insects, however repulsive and noxious, could not be killed. Water could not be drunk till it was first strained, lest minute forms of life should be swallowed and destroyed. We have just seen how carpentry, basket-making, working in leather, and other respectable occupations were held in disrepute, because they could not be carried on without a certain cost of plant and animal life. Some zealots went so far as to question the blamelessness of tilling the ground on account of the unavoidable injury done to worms and insects in ploughing.[2]

But it was of ascetics that the greatest precautions

[1] *Manu*, iv. 207–216. [2] x. 84.

were exacted. In walking, they had to scan the ground carefully before them so as to avoid crushing any living creature. It was forbidden them to tread on a ploughed field. During the rainy season, when insects swarmed on the ground in greatest number, they were allowed to move about as little as possible.[1]

Through these superstitious restrictions and many others of minor importance, freedom of action was very narrowly circumscribed for the devotee of Brahmanism. This was especially true of the Brahman himself, who was obliged to eschew many things that were lawful for members of the other castes. It is not surprising that the more scrupulous felt life to be a burden, and became imbued with the spirit of pessimism.

But if we abstract from this superstitious and arbitrary limitation of human conduct, and take into consideration the Brahman teaching of right and wrong in the recognized sphere of ethics, we are confronted with a largeness and depth of moral discernment that justly excites our admiration.

Truthfulness, honesty, self-control, obedience to parents and superiors, the moderate use of food and drink, chastity, and almsgiving were strongly inculcated. Especial stress was laid on the duty of acting charitably towards students, ascetics, the sick, the aged, and the feeble. Though allowing, like other

[1] *Manu*, vi. 46 ff.

religions of antiquity, polygamy and repudiation, Brahmanism strongly forbade adultery and all forms of unchaste indulgence. It condemned, likewise, in severe terms suicide, abortion, perjury, slander, drunkenness, gambling, oppressive usury, hypocrisy, and slothfulness. Its Christian-like aim to soften the hard side of human nature is seen in its many lessons of mildness, forbearance, respect for the aged, kindness towards servants and slaves, and in its insisting, though to an excessive degree, on not causing death to any living creature. Wanton cruelty to animals, met from the Brahman the reprobation it deserves. Nothing is more striking than its insistence on the duty of forgiving injuries and returning good for evil. In the *Laws of Manu*, we read of the ascetic:

"Let him patiently bear hard words, let him not insult anybody; and let him not become anybody's enemy for the sake of this [perishable] body.

"Against an angry man let him not in return show anger, let him bless when cursed, and let him not utter speech, devoid of truth, scattered at the seven gates." [1]

Nor did this standard, so remarkable, of moral right and wrong, apply simply to external acts. It penetrated to the secret chamber of the heart. It demanded recognition of the very will. The threefold division of good and bad acts into thoughts, words, and deeds, finds frequent expression in Brahmanic teaching.

[1] *Manu*, vi. 47, 48.

"He, forsooth, whose speech and thoughts are pure and ever perfectly guarded, gains the whole reward which is conferred by the Vedanta." [1]

"Let him not even, though in pain [speak words], cutting [others] to the quick; let him not injure others in thought or deed; let him not utter speeches which make [others] afraid of him, since that will prevent him from gaining heaven." [2]

"Neither [the study of] the Vedas nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor any self-imposed restraint, nor austerities, ever procure the attainment [of rewards] to a man whose heart is contaminated with sensuality." [3]

"The wife who keeps chaste in thoughts, words, and body, and remains faithful to her husband, attains to a reunion with him in the next world and is called virtuous." [4]

The *Laws of Manu* abound in noble sentiments like these. The more striking ones have been culled out by Monier Williams and finely translated in his work entitled *Brahmanism and Hinduism*. It is from this collection that the following choice sentences have been taken: —

"From poison thou mayest take the food of life,
The purest gold from lumps of impure earth,
Example of good conduct from a foe,
Sweet speech and gentleness from e'en a child, —
Something from all; from men of low degree
Lessons of wisdom if thou humble be." [5]

"He who by firmness gains the mastery
Over his words, his mind, and his whole body,
Is justly called a triple governor." [6]

[1] *Manu*, ii. 160. [2] ii. 160–161. [3] ii. 97.
[4] v. 155; cf. xi. 232, 242; xii. 3–10. [5] ii. 238, 239.
[6] xii. 10.

"E'en as a driver checks his restive steeds,
Do thou, if thou art wise, restrain thy passions,
Which, running wild, will hurry thee away." [1]

"Pride not thyself on thy religious works;
Give to the poor, but talk not of thy gifts,
By pride religious merit melts away,
The merit of thy alms by ostentation." [2]

"None sees us, say the sinful in their hearts;
Yes, the gods see them, and the omniscient spirit
Within their breasts. Thou thinkest, O good friend,
'I am alone,' but there resides within thee
A being who respects thy every act,
Knows all thy goodness and thy wickedness." [3]

"If with the greatest Divinity who dwells
Within thy breast, thou hast no controversy,
Go not to Ganges' water to be cleansed,
Nor make a pilgrimage to Kuru's fields." [4]

"Contentment is the root of happiness,
And discontent the root of misery.
Wouldst thou be happy, be thou moderate." [5]

"Thou canst not gather what thou dost not sow,
As thou dost plant the tree, so will it grow." [6]

"Depend not on another, rather lean
Upon thyself; trust to thine own exertions, —
Subjection to another's will gives pain;
True happiness consists in self-reliance." [7]

[1] *Manu*, ii. 88. [2] iv. 236, 237. [3] viii. 85, 91.
[4] viii. 92. [5] iv. 12. [6] ix. 40.
[7] iv. 160.

"Strive to complete the task thou hast commenced;
Wearied, renew thy efforts once again;
Again fatigued, once more the work begin.
So shalt thou earn success and fortune win." [1]

"Be courteous to thy guest who visits thee;
Offer a seat, bed, water, food enough,
According to thy substance, hospitality;
Naught taking for thyself till he be served;
Homage to guests brings wealth, fame, life, and heaven." [2]

"Though thou mayest suffer for thy righteous acts,
Ne'er give thy mind to aught but honest gain." [3]

"Fidelity till death, this is the sum
Of mutual duties for a married pair." [4]

"Then only is a man a perfect man
When he is three, — himself, his wife, his son, —
For thus have learned men the law declared,
'A husband is one person with his wife.'" [5]

"When Goodness, wounded by Iniquity,
Comes to a court of justice. and the judge
Extracts not tenderly the pointed dart,
That very shaft shall pierce him to the heart." [6]

"Daily perform thine own appointed work
Unweariedly; and to obtain a friend, —
A sure companion to the future world, —
Collect a store of virtue like the ants,
Who garner up their treasures into heaps;
For neither father, mother, wife, nor son,

[1] *Manu*, ix. 300. [2] iii. 106; iv. 29. [3] iv. 171.
[4] ix. 101. [5] ix. 45. [6] viii. 12.

Nor kinsman will remain beside thee then;
When thou art passing to that other home,
Thy virtue will thy only comrade be.
Single is every living creature born,
Single he passes to another world,[1]
Single he eats the fruit of evil deeds,
Single, the fruit of good; and when he leaves
His body like a log or heap of clay
Upon the ground, his kinsmen walk away;
Virtue alone stays by him at the tomb,
And bears him through the weary, trackless gloom." [2]

The following passage, not translated by Mr. Williams, reminds one of the familiar utterance in *Wisdom*, iv. 8: —

"No man is old because his hair is gray;
Who knows the Veda, though he still be young,
Is by the gods accounted rich in years." [3]

[1] "Je mourrai seul." — *Pascal.*
[2] *Manu*, iv. 238–242.
[3] ii. 156.

CHAPTER IV

PANTHEISTIC SPECULATIONS

The development towards monotheism: Prajapati-Brahman — The rise of pantheistic speculations — The Upanishads — Brahman-Atman-Purusha identified with all things — The incomprehensibility of Brahman — Maya — Rebirth and misery due to maya — Brahman pessimism — Recognition of man's identity with Brahman the only means of salvation — Absorption into Brahman the true end of man — Pantheism subversive of traditional Brahmanism, though nominally in harmony with it.

WE have already seen that the religion of the Vedic hymns was characterized by a strong monotheistic tendency. The need was felt of a supreme god endowed with the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and retributive justice; but in the choice of the deity there was great uncertainty. To different gods, Varuna, Mitra, Agni, Indra, Soma, was accorded in turn the honor of supremacy. The worshipper who yesterday praised Varuna as supreme, was found to-day bestowing the same compliment on Indra or some other deity. For a while, indeed, Varuna bid fair to outshine the other gods and win his way to exclusive supremacy. But a stronger current of popularity set in favor of Indra, who in turn soon found a formidable rival in Agni.

The inconsistency of thus attributing to several gods properties that, strictly speaking, could belong to one alone, seems to have made itself felt in the minds of the priestly class. And so in the later Vedic hymns we find a new deity coming into recognition. This was Prajapati, lord of creatures, omnipotent and supreme, the upholder of the moral order. The gods of the ancient pantheon came to be viewed, now as the creatures of Prajapati, now as the various forms under which he made himself known. This new deity seems to have been a priestly, rather than a popular, conception. It won its way into the liturgy; but meanwhile Indra, Agni, Soma, and the other gods continued to hold their old place in worship and in popular esteem. Another designation of Prajapati was Brahman, and it is by this latter name that the supreme deity came in the course of time to be commonly addressed. In the popular religion, however, Brahman had a rather shadowy existence, being more remote than the gods of ancient tradition and hence less prominently the direct object of worship.

Such was the development towards monotheism in the popular Brahmanic religion. But besides this, there was a parallel movement towards pantheism.

That the gods of the Vedas were but feebly individualized is plainly shown by the readiness with which the attributes of one god were transferred to another. Hence when the new conception of the

supreme deity Prajapati or Brahman came to be recognized, it was an easy step to identify with him the various gods of tradition. But herein lay a grave danger of lapsing into pantheism, owing to the association of these gods with material phenomena. For if the sun-god, fire-god, earth-god, heaven-god, and the rest were nothing more than manifestations of the supreme deity, then the conclusion seemed legitimate to many that the very sun, fire, earth, heaven, and other parts of the visible universe were identical with Brahman.

It was but another step to identify man himself with this great underlying deity, and the pantheistic theory was nearly complete.

This school of thought was not a popular one. It was esoteric in its teachings. Not all Brahmans, even, were initiated into its mysterious but precious wisdom. It was chiefly the possession of those who lived apart in the forest as hermits and ascetics. The more influential assumed the rôle of teachers, founded schools, and by the accumulation of their aphorisms gave rise to a new class of literature, the philosophic, mystical, pantheistic treatises known as the *Aranyakas* and *Upanishads*.

Like the New Testament, the Upanishads do not attempt to give a systematic exposition of doctrine. Nor do they agree in all details, for they are the products of various rival schools of thought. They consist largely of dialogues and tracts setting forth

in a mysterious manner the pantheistic way of salvation. Thrown together without orderly arrangement, these teachings are mingled with many absurdities and puerile explanations. In the course of time they took their place with the Vedas and Brahmanas as inspired books, being also known as the *Vedanta* (End of the Veda). They became the authoritative basis for the Vedanta school of religious philosophy, which has maintained its existence down to the present day.[1]

The fundamental tenet of the pantheistic school was the absolute identity of all existing things with one self-existent, spiritual being. This being went by various names. Now it was called Prajapati, now Brahman, now Purusha (the Male or Person), now Atman (the Self). By Atman was meant primarily the principle of life and personality in each individual. Not till after the identity of each individual self with Brahman was recognized, does the word Atman seem to have become a designation of the highest deity.

Like the materialists, the pantheistic Brahmans sought to reduce all things animate and inanimate to terms of one simple substance. But while the former declare that all things are matter, the latter held all things to be spirit. The material world with its endless variety of forms was Brahman. Man was Brahman. The very gods were Brahman. Out of

[1] The principal Upanishads have been translated in vol. I. and XV. of the *Sacred Books of the East.*

Brahman, by a process of emanation, came all individual beings, and into Brahman they were destined ultimately to be absorbed and to lose their individuality, just as the drops of spray tossed up from the surface of the ocean fall back to become one again with the great parent mass.

"This is the truth. As from a blazing fire sparks like unto fire fly forth a thousandfold, thus are various beings brought forth from the Imperishable, my friend, and return thither also. . . . From him [when entering on creation] is born breath, mind, and all organs of sense, ether, air, light, water, and the earth, the support of all. . . . From him the many Devas too are begotten, the Sadhyas [genii], men, cattle, birds. . . . The Person is all this." [1]

"All this is Brahman. Let a man meditate on that [visible world] as beginning, ending, and breathing in it [the Brahman]. . . . He from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odors and tastes proceed, who embraces all this, who never speaks and who is never surprised, he, myself within the heart, is that Brahman." [2]

What was the nature of this all-embracing, all-pervading deity? In the answer to this question, we see the wide difference between the anthropomorphic conception of the traditional nature-gods and the pantheistic notion of Brahman. Brahman is as hard to describe as pure matter. He is without

[1] *Mundaka Upanishad*, ii. 1. — *S. B. E.* XV. pp. 34–35. Cf. *Katha Upan.* ii. 5. — *S. B. E.* XV. p. 19.

[2] *Chandogya Upanishad*, iii. 14. — *S. B. E.* I. p. 48.

parts, without form, a subtile essence that cannot be apprehended.

"That which cannot be seen, nor seized, which has no family and no caste, no eyes nor ears, no hands nor feet, the eternal, the omnipresent [all-pervading], infinitesimal, that which is imperishable, that it is which the wise regard as the source of all beings." [1]

In his own domain of eternal, unchangeable existence, he is all but unconscious; for according to Hindu thought, there is nothing for him to perceive since he himself is all that is, and since perception implies duality, a distinction between the perceiver and the perceived.

"Verily, beloved, that Self is imperishable and of an indestructible nature. For when there is, as it were, duality, then one sees the other, one smells the other, one tastes the other, one salutes the other, one hears the other, one perceives the other, one touches the other, one knows the other; but when the Self only is all this, how should he see another, how should he smell another, how should he taste another, how should he salute another, how should he hear another, how should he touch another, how should he know another? How should he know him by whom he knows all this? That Self is to be described by no, no! He is incomprehensible, for he cannot be comprehended; he is imperishable, for he cannot perish; he is unattached, for he does not attach himself; unfettered, he does not suffer, he does not fail." [2]

[1] *Mund. Upan.* i. 1. — *S. B. E.* XV. p. 28.
[2] *Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad*, iv. 5. — *S. B. E.* XV. p. 185.

This recognized unity of all things in the incomprehensible Self, or Brahman, necessarily implied the corresponding persuasion that the things of sense were not what they seemed. The manifold external world was *maya*, illusion. It had no real existence, being but a passing manifestation of Brahman. Even the gods were not real entities, having an existence of their own. Like man, like the tree and the stone, they were but transitory emanations of the one, unchanging, incomprehensible spirit. Brahman alone existed. He alone was eternal, imperishable.

It was the misfortune of men at large not to realize this double truth. To take maya for reality, to delude himself into the belief that he was a distinct individual with a personality of his own, was the fatal mistake of the ignorant and thoughtless man. It was this false view of things that lay at the root of all misery. For, ignoring his identity with Brahman, he did not see that his true end, and consequently his highest bliss, consisted in being absorbed into the great spirit from which he sprang. He was led to set his heart on a merely personal existence. He became a creature of desires, and attaching himself to objects unworthy of his affection, stained his soul with guilt.

"Carried along by the waves of the qualities, darkened in his imaginations, unstable, fickle, crippled, full of desires, vacillating, he enters into belief, believing, 'I am he,' 'this is mine'; he binds his self by his self, as a bird with a net,

and overcome afterwards by the fruits of what he has done, he enters on a good or bad birth; downward or upward is his course, and overcome by the pairs, he roams about."[1]

According to popular Brahmanic belief, the obligation of being born again was incurred only by those whose transgressions in the present life, as well as in past forms of existence, had not been expiated by proper penance. Rebirth was nothing else than a form of punishment. The man who died rich in merit and free from guilt was promised a personal existence of endless bliss above.

In the Upanishad school, a different view prevailed. Tortures in hell, and vile rebirths continued to be recognized as the punishments of wickedness. But freedom from all rebirth was also denied to the virtuous man who, ignorant of his identity with Brahman, counted on a personal existence. By virtue of his good works, he would mount to heaven, he might even win a place among the gods. But this individual life of rest and bliss was at best but fleeting. It could not last forever. After a while, his store of merits would give out like oil in a lamp, and he would then have to descend once more to earth to taste in a new birth the bitterness of earthly existence.

"Fools dwelling in darkness, wise in their own conceit and puffed up with vain knowledge, go round and round,

[1] *Maitrayana-Brahmana Upanishad*, iii. 3. — *S. B. E.* XV. p. 297.

staggering to and fro like blind men led by the blind. Children when they have long lived in ignorance, consider themselves happy. Because those who depend on their good works are, owing to their passions, improvident, they fall and become miserable when their life [in the world which they had gained by their good works] is finished. Considering sacrifice and good works as the best, these fools know no higher good, and having enjoyed [their reward] on the height of heaven gained by good works, they enter again this world or a lower one." [1]

"But they who, living in a village, practise [a life of] sacrifices, works of public utility, and alms, they go to the smoke, from smoke to night, from night to the dark half of the moon, from the dark half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the south. But they do not reach the year. From the months they go to the world of the fathers, from the world of the fathers to the ether, from the ether to the moon. That is Soma the King. Here they are loved by the Devas, yes, the Devas love them. Having dwelt there till their [good] works are consumed, they return again that way as they came." [2]

The prospect of being thus condemned to go through the experiences of earthly life again and again was calculated to arouse the deepest concern; for Brahmanic speculations had led to a very pessimistic view of human existence.

"O Saint," a converted king cries out, "what is the use of the enjoyment of pleasure in this offensive, pithless

[1] *Mundaka Upanishad*, i. 2. — *S. B. E.* XV. p. 32.

[2] *Chandogya Upanishad*, v. 10. — *S. B. E.* I. p. 80. Cf. *S. B. E.* XV. p. 176.

body — a mere mass of bones, skin, sinews, marrow, flesh, seed, blood, mucus, tears, phlegm, ordure, water, bile, and slime! What is the use of the enjoyment of pleasures in the body which is assailed by lust, hatred, greed, delusion, fear, anguish, jealousy, separation from what is loved, union with what is not loved, hunger, thirst, old age, death, illness, grief, and other evils. . . .

"In such a world as this, what is the use of enjoyment of pleasures, if he who has fed on them is sure to return [to this world] again and again. Deign therefore to take me out! In this world I am like a frog in a dry well. O Saint, thou art my way, thou art my way." [1]

How, then, was man to escape from the fatal necessity of being born again and again? What was the true way of salvation? The Upanishads gave answer, the perfection of existence is to be gained, not by the storing up of merits through prayers, fasts, sacrifices, and virtuous deeds, but by the saving knowledge of man's identity with Brahman. As soon as one could say from conviction "I am Brahman," the bonds were broken that held him fast to individual existence and to ever-recurring births. He attained to that blessed state of passiveness and inactivity, of freedom from all desires, in which he was no longer disposed to do evil, no longer anxious to lay up merit for a transitory enjoyment of bliss in heaven. Mortifications and austerities were still welcome as a help to freedom from desires, to tranquillity of life, to

[1] *Maitrayana-Brahmana Upan.* i. 3-4. — *S. B. E.* XV. pp. 288–289. Cf. *Manu*, vi. 76, 77. — *Institutes of Vishnu*, xcvi. — *S. B. E.* VII. p. 279.

concentration of mind on Brahman. Thus, peaceful and tranquil, he lived on till death put an end to the seeming duality, and he became absorbed in Brahman, like a raindrop in the mighty ocean.

"Verily in the beginning this was Brahman, that Brahman knew [its] Self only, saying, 'I am Brahman.' From it all this sprang. Thus, whatever Deva was awakened [so as to know Brahman], he indeed became that [Brahman]; and the same with rishis and men. The rishi Vamadeva saw and understood it, singing, 'I was Manu [moon], I was the sun.' Therefore now also he who thus knows that he is Brahman, becomes all this, and even the Devas cannot prevent it, for he himself is their self." [1]

"Their deeds and their self with all his knowledge become all one in the highest Imperishable. As the flowing rivers disappear in the sea, losing their name and their form, thus a wise man, freed from name and form, goes to the Divine Person who is greater than the great. He who knows that highest Brahman, becomes even Brahman. . . . He overcomes grief, he overcomes evil, free from the fetters of the heart, he becomes immortal." [2]

In this way was complete emancipation to be obtained. Nor did absorption into Brahman, with its attendant loss of personality, and its adoption of a quasi-unconscious existence for all future time, count as a disadvantage. By being thus identified with Brahman, the soul passed from its unreal to its real condition; it became raised to the blessed existence

[1] *Brih.-Aran. Upan.* i. 4. — *S. B. E.* XV. p. 88.
[2] *Mund. Upan.* iii. 2. — *S. B. E.* XV. p. 41.

of divinity itself, and thereby attained a lot beyond comparison with any known to man on earth or in heaven.

"If a man is healthy, wealthy, and lord of others, surrounded by all human enjoyments, that is the highest blessing of men. Now a hundred of these human blessings make one blessing of the fathers who have conquered the world [of fathers]. A hundred blessings of the fathers who have conquered this world make one blessing in the Gandharva world. A hundred blessings in the Gandharva world make one blessing of the Devas by merit [work, sacrifice], who obtain their godhead by merit. A hundred blessings of the Devas by merit make one blessing of the Devas by birth, also of a Srotriya [1] who is without sin and not overcome by desire. A hundred blessings of the Devas by birth make one blessing in the world of Prajapati. . . . A hundred blessings in the world of Prajapati make one blessing in the world of Brahman. And this is the highest blessing." [2]

Such, in brief, was the teaching of the pantheistic school as set forth in the Upanishads. While professing to be in perfect harmony with the ancient Vedas, it was a wide departure from the traditional religion. The happiness of heaven, of which the ancient bards had sung, and which had been the hope and inspiration of so many generations, it robbed of all stability and permanence, and set up instead, as the supreme end of man, the questionable bliss of losing one's individuality by absorption into Brahman and

[1] A Brahman thoroughly versed in the Vedas.

[2] *Brih.-Aran. Upan.* iv. 4. — *S. B. E.* XV. pp. 171–172.

thus sinking into his eternal sleep of unconscious repose.

It degraded the Vedic gods, and Prajapati the personal deity as well, to a condition of comparative insignificance, by declaring them to be but transitory emanations of Brahman, and by making the salvation of each individual depend, not on them, but on his personal effort. For the same reason it greatly diminished the importance of the Vedic rites, — the prayers, the sacrifices, the penances, — since it was not in virtue of these, but by the recognition of one's identity with Brahman that one could bring to a happy issue the great task of final deliverance. The ideal man was no longer the Brahman, intent on the performance of the multitudinous Vedic ceremonies and on the recitation of the Vedic texts, but rather the ascetic, far removed from the active walks of life, absorbed in contemplation and the practice of austerities.

While thus bringing the Vedas down from the high place of honor they had heretofore enjoyed, the pantheistic innovators gave them a nominal veneration and allegiance. Though the higher Upanishad teaching could alone bring salvation, and thus rendered superfluous the lower Vedic teaching, yet the latter was recognized to be better suited to cruder minds. It was not to be contemned because it did not lead to the highest good. They even went so far as to insist on the necessity of learning the Vedas and performing the Vedic rites before one could enjoy the privi-

lege of acquiring the higher knowledge of salvation. The lower knowledge was declared to be an indispensable preparation for the higher. But the step was easy to the more radical and consistent view that Vedic rites had no claim on man's attention at all. This step was taken by the heretical schools, notably by Buddhism.

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PART II

Buddhism

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Buddhism

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDER, BUDDHA[1]

Brahman pantheism popular with the caste of warriors — It gives rise to rival sects, one of which is Buddhism — Of Buddha but little known for certain — His father not a king but a petty raja — His birthplace — His various names — His education and marriage — His abandonment of home for the ascetic life — His long period of missionary activity — The BUDDHA-LEGEND — Miraculous conception and birth — Asita — Life in the palace of pleasure — The flight from home — Mortifications — The Bodhi-tree — Mara's temptations — Supreme enlightenment — First preaching at Benares — Conversions — Devadatta — The fatal meal with Chunda — The painful journey to Kusinara — Under the Sala-trees — Subhadda — Buddha's last words — Obsequies — Division of relics — Estimate of Buddha's character.

THE pantheistic teaching embodied in the Upanishads and reduced to a systematic form in the so-called Vedanta school of religious philosophy was a radical departure from popular Brahmanism. It was a new religion under the thin disguise of orthodoxy. While professing allegiance to the sacred Vedas, it was a menace to the tradi-

[1] The references throughout this volume to works on Buddhism apply to the editions indicated in the bibliography.

tional religion. It might insist on the traditional observance of the Vedic rites as a necessary preparation for the reception of its own saving truths. But in declaring the popular religion utterly helpless to secure true salvation, it prepared the way for more consistent minds to reject Brahmanism completely.

From the first the new pantheistic religion seems to have found a welcome in the caste of nobles or warriors. Doubtless they felt the burden of a religion which put so many restraints on their freedom of action, whose forms of worship were so many and so complicated, whose liturgical language was an archaic tongue that few could fully understand, whose official ministers were exalted to a position of importance far above themselves. They would naturally look kindly on a movement which offered them an escape from the tyranny of the popular religion without at the same time exposing them to the charge of unorthodoxy. And so, in fact, we are told in the Upanishads of kings and nobles professing the new faith and taking part in discussions and conversations concerning it.

But pantheistic Brahmanism was not without rival movements in the claim of having discovered the true way of salvation. They started with the same morbid view that conscious life is a burden and a misfortune, not worth the living, so that true happiness was to be had only in the state of soul like dreamless sleep, a state free from all desires, free from con-

scious action. They, too, took for granted the Upanishad doctrine of the endless chain of births. But they differed from pantheistic Brahmanism both in their attitude towards the Vedas and the Vedic rites, and in the manner by which emancipation from rebirths and from conscious existence was to be obtained. In their absolute rejection of Vedic rites, they stamped themselves as heresies. Of these the one destined to win the greatest renown was Buddhism.

Of Buddha, the founder of this great movement, very little is positively known. The portrayal of his life which tradition has handed down is so strongly colored with the fanciful and marvellous that one is tempted to doubt whether it is not all a fiction. One of the foremost of living scholars[1] of Buddhism has argued with no little persuasiveness that the main features of the legendary account of Buddha's career are nothing more than adaptations of sun and storm myths, clustered about an historical character of which little for certain can be known.

Still with the aid of the ancient Buddhist monuments, scholars have marked out what seems to be a fairly probable sketch of his career.

The family from which Buddha sprang, was of the warrior-caste. They were a family of feudal princes, known as the Sakyas, with the cognomen of Go-

[1] E. Senart, *Essai sur la légende du Bouddha, son caractère et ses origines.*

tama. His father, called in the Buddhist records Suddhodana, was a petty raja, ruling over a small stretch of country along the southern border of the district now known as Nepal.

The capital of this little kingdom was Kapilavastu, a town famous in Buddhist annals, but fallen centuries ago in ruins, the very site of which was unknown till of late, when it was brought to light by the patient researches of the archæologist Dr. A. A. Führer.[1] Eighteen miles southwest of this site is the traditional spot Lumbini, where, about the middle of the sixth century B.C., Buddha was born.[2]

There is reason for suspecting the tradition which asserts that his parents gave him the name Siddhattha,[3] so prophetic of his future greatness. It is more likely that the name assigned to him in his infancy was Gotama,[4] the cognomen of his father, the name by which he is very commonly designated. Later in life, he became known to his disciples by other names, as Sakya-muni (the Sakya-sage), Sakya-

[1] Cf. A. A. Führer, *Monograph on Sakyamuni's Birthplace in the Nepalese Tarai*, ch. viii.

[2] Here Dr. Führer unearthed a pillar of stone containing this inscription of Asoka (250 B.C.) "King Piyadasi, beloved of the gods, having been anointed twenty years, came himself and worshipped, saying, 'Here Buddha Sakyamuni was born.' And he caused to be made a stone representing a horse, and he caused this stone pillar to be erected. Because here the worshipped one was born, the village of Lummini has been made free of taxes and a recipient of wealth." Op. cit. p. 27.

[3] He that succeeds in his aim.

[4] Sanskrit, Gautama.

sinha (the Sakya-lion), Bhagavat (the Blessed One), Sugata (the Welcome One), Jina (the Conqueror), Tathagata (the Perfect One), but most common of all, Buddha (the Enlightened).

A raja's son, he must have received the education deemed indispensable to the youths of his caste, and was very likely sent to some learned Brahman to spend a number of years in the study of the Vedas.

Following the immemorial customs of the East, he married at an early age, and if we may trust tradition, exercised a prince's privilege of maintaining a harem. His principal wife bore him a son. But his heart was not at rest. The pleasures of the world soon palled upon him. He became convinced of the vanity of life, and resolved to renounce his home and high station. He put on the hermit's garb and retired to the forest, devoting himself to penance and meditation, studying doubtless the way of salvation as taught in the Upanishads. But even this did not satisfy his soul. After several years of austere life as an ascetic, he became convinced that perfect peace could not be obtained by rigorous fasts and mortifications. He gave himself to long and serious thought, the fruit of which was the persuasion that he had discovered the only true way of escaping from the misery of rebirths and of attaining to Nirvana.

He then set out to preach his gospel of deliverance, beginning at Benares. His attractive personality and his earnest, impressive eloquence soon won over to

his cause a number of the warrior-caste. Brahmans too, felt the persuasiveness of his words, and gave adherence to his doctrine. It was not long before he had a band of enthusiastic disciples gathered about him, in whose company he went from place to place, making converts by his preaching. Those of his disciples who were sufficiently versed in the new doctrine were also sent through the length and breadth of the land, carrying the good news of salvation to high and low, rich and poor, and inviting members of all castes to put on the yellow robes of the followers of Buddha and seek the rest of Nirvana. The converts soon became numerous, and were formed into a great brotherhood of monks. Such was the work to which Buddha gave himself with unsparing zeal for over forty years. At length, worn out by his long life of activity, he fell sick after a meal of dried boar's flesh, and died in the eightieth year of his age. The approximate date of his death is 480 B.C.

The tendency to myth-making is natural to man. In the present age of positive, critical science, it is kept fairly in check. But in the uncritical and over-credulous ages of the past, it had almost an unlimited range of play. Heroes and saints were hardly removed from the walks of life when the luxuriant growths of legend intertwined themselves with the sober records of their lives, often to such a degree as

to overshadow and render insignificant what belonged to the domain of historic truth. The apocryphal gospels and some mediæval lives of saints are illustrations of this.[1] So likewise the records which have come down to us of the founder of Buddhism.

The meagre facts of Buddha's life have been embellished with an abundance of fanciful and wonderful events, some of which bear a curious though imperfect resemblance to certain features of the life of our blessed Lord.

Legend tells how the future Buddha raised himself by a vast series of virtuous lives to the dignity of a heavenly spirit, and how, realizing the future greatness that was in store for him, he chose the time and place for his birth as the redeemer of suffering humanity. He chose for his mother the virtuous Maya; for she alone answered to the conditions requisite for giving birth to a Buddha, namely, to be of high family, never to have tasted strong drink, and to have been distinguished for chaste and virtuous conduct during one hundred thousand worlds.

In her he was miraculously conceived while she lay asleep, and dreamed that he had passed through her right side in the guise of a small white elephant. At that moment a light of surprising brightness illuminated ten thousand worlds. Prodigies took place on

[1] In the admirable studies of the Bollandists (*Acta Sanctorum*) this legendary element of Catholic hagiography is noted with the greatest care.

earth. The blind saw, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, the lame walked. Sufferings of all kinds ceased. The birds cut short their flight. The rivers ceased to flow. Flowers of all kinds burst into richest bloom. The air was filled with sweetest odors and stirred by gentle, refreshing zephyrs. It bore to the ears of astonished peoples the music of heavenly spirits.[1]

Wonderful as was his conception, wonderful, too, was his birth. His mother, obtaining permission to visit the royal garden at Lumbini, repaired thither in a splendid chariot, escorted by thousands of gods, warriors, and waiting women. As she entered the garden the shrubs and trees burst into bloom. She directed her steps to a Sala-tree, the boughs of which bent down over her. While she stood admiring its blossoms, the child was born. Emerging miraculously from her right side, he took seven steps towards the north, and exclaimed, "This is my last birth. I am the greatest of beings."

The prodigies that had marked the time of his conception were now once more displayed. With mingled songs of joy from gods and men, the child and mother were conveyed to the royal palace. Seven days later the mother died, and was reborn in the Tusita heaven, being rendered too sacred by Buddha's birth to bear other children.

[1] Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. 64. Bish. Bigandet, *Legend of Gaudama*, pp. 26 ff.

In the Himalaya region lived a venerable rishi or ascetic, Asita by name. On the day of Gotama's birth, having mounted, as was his wont, to the upper heavens to refresh himself after his morning meal, he came upon the gods waving their robes and shouting with joy, and was told that to King Suddhodana was born a son who would one day become a Buddha. At once he directed his course towards the kingdom Suddhodana, and by his power of rapid flight soon reached the city of Kapilavastu. He asked to see the wonderful babe, and, having discerned on his tiny form the thirty-two marks of a supreme Buddha,[1] he told of the glorious career to which the child was destined, weeping, however, because he would not live himself to see the day.

Passing over the wonderful incidents of his childhood and early youth, — his marvellous trance under the Jambu-tree, his wonderful progress in the arts, whereby in a few lessons he surpassed his teachers, his easy victory over his youthful competitors in the athletic contest, — we come to the critical period in his life, when, in the society of his wife Yasodhara and innumerable singing girls, he devoted himself wholly to a life of pleasure in the splendid palace his father had prepared for him. Anxious to have his son become a universal monarch, the king had taken the greatest care to keep from the eyes of the prince

[1] For the thirty-two marks of the Buddha, see H. Alabaster, *The Wheel of the Law*, pp. 110–115, also 312-313.

every spectacle of human misery. But the gods foiled his plans. One day, as Gotama took a drive beyond the precincts of his palace, they brought before his sight the four objects which were destined to turn him to the homeless state, — namely, a man enfeebled with old age, one wasted with sickness, a corpse, and a monk. By these sights the vanity and impermanence of things were brought home to him, and he returned to his palace with the resolve to abandon all he had thus far held dear, and to become an ascetic. In vain that night did his many singing girls try with seductive wiles to win him back to his customary life of pleasure. At length, overcome by weariness, they fell asleep, sprawled about in hideous and revolting attitudes. This sight filled Gotama with renewed disgust for the world. He felt that the time for his act of renunciation was come. At midnight, with the aid of his trusty attendant, he got ready his favorite horse, and without a word of farewell, even to his wife and son, galloped off in the darkness. Invisible hands opened the gates of the palace of the city. At this juncture, Mara, the Lord of Death and Pleasure, appeared, and tried to dissuade him from his purpose. "Depart not, O lord," he cried out, "in seven days from now the wheel of empire will appear, and will make you sovereign over the four continents and the two thousand adjacent isles. Stop, my lord!" Gotama heeded not the tempter, but sped on through the darkness of the

night, and did not stop till break of day, when he found himself at the farther shore of a distant river.

Here he cut off his hair with his sword, and, exchanging his princely robes for the garments of a hunter, he sent back his attendant and steed, and began to practise the life of an ascetic.

Many were the Brahman sages he consulted in the hope of finding the peace his heart yearned for, but in vain. After six years of ever-increasing austerities, which reduced him to mere skin and bones, and all but caused his death, he became convinced that the goal he sought was not to be attained by these excessive mortifications. He began to take food. His five companions in asceticism now abandoned him as having lapsed from the life of perfection.

The great day of his enlightenment was now at hand. Having bathed in the river Nairanjana and partaken of the rice and cream; especially prepared for him by a shepherd's daughter, he proceeded to the Bodhi-tree (the tree of knowledge), and sitting cross-legged beneath it, with his face to the east, he made the vow not to rise until he had attained complete enlightenment.

In this purpose of Gotama, Mara, Lord of Death and Pleasure, saw that his own power was being put in jeopardy. He recognized the necessity either of enticing or of driving him from the Bodhi-tree. First, he tried the method of artful persuasion. At his bidding, his three daughters sought to turn the

heart of Gotama to the pursuit of sensual pleasures. Their efforts proved in vain.

Then Mara exerted all his power to drive him from the Bodhi-tree. He sent against him a frightful tempest and a shower of burning rocks and cinders. The very gods fled in dismay, but Gotama sat impassive. As the falling rocks seemed about to crush him, they were turned into a shower of blossoms. Hot with rage at being thus balked, the tempter assumed a form of hideous appearance, with a thousand hands holding every conceivable kind of weapon, and having mounted his war-elephant one hundred and fifty leagues high, came rushing like a flood with his host of frightful monsters against the saint absorbed in meditation. Calm and undisturbed he sat, while the terrible missles hurled at him were changed into garlands of flowers. This signal failure caused Mara to despair. He withdrew for good with his army. Meanwhile the scattered gods took courage, and returning to the Bodhi-tree, chanted the victor's praises.

That very night supreme enlightenment was attained, and as he seized the prize for which he had toiled so long and patiently, he burst into the song of joy sung by every Buddha.

"Long have I wandered, long!
Bound by the chain of life,
Thro' many births;
Seeking thus long in vain
Whence comes this life in man, his consciousness, his pain!

"And hard to bear is birth,
When pain and death but lead to birth again.
Found! It is found!
O Cause of Individuality!
No longer shalt thou make a house for me

"Broken are all thy beams,
Thy ridgepole shattered!
Into Nirvana now my mind has past.
The end of cravings has been reached at last!" [1]

Seven weeks he spent near the Bodhi-tree, enjoying the bliss of emancipation. Then, having partaken of food offered him by two merchants, he repaired to Benares, where he set in motion the wheel of the law. His first converts were the five ascetics, his former companions, who had deserted him when he gave up the practice of fasting.

Among the disciples who soon rallied in great numbers around him was his cousin, Devadatta. Like Judas, this disciple sought to thwart the plans of his master. Several times he plotted to destroy him. At one time he hired thirty bowmen to slay him; but as they drew near, awed by the majesty of his presence, they fell at his feet craving forgiveness, and, after listening to his words of wisdom, were converted. On another occasion, he rolled a huge stone down a steep slope below which Buddha was walking. It split into fragments on the way, and only a piece struck the master, wounding his foot. It was dressed by a physician, and found completely

[1] Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. 103.

well the next morning. Another time an infuriated elephant was turned upon him in a narrow street. As it seemed about to crush him in its wild onset, it checked its course and bent in submission before him. Finally, the evil-minded disciple sought to slay Buddha with his own hand. But as he approached to carry out his purpose, the earth beneath him opened and he was cast headlong into hell. His punishment consists in having his feet sunk ankle-deep into the burning ground. A red-hot pan caps his head to the ears. His body is transfixed with five red-hot iron bars. This torment he will have to endure for a whole revolution of nature.

The story of Buddha's last days as told in the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta*, or *Book of the Great Decease*, belongs to a much earlier tradition, and while not without exaggerations, is marked by much pathos and beauty.

As he sees that his life-work has been accomplished, he warns his disciples of his approaching end.

"Behold, now, O brethren, I exhort you, saying: 'All component things must grow old. Work out your salvation with diligence. The final extinction of the Tathagata[1] will take place before long. At the end of three months from this time the Tathagata will die!'"[2]

The occasion of his fatal illness is the meal prepared for him and his disciples by Chunda the smith.

[1] One of Buddha's appellations. [2] *S. B. E.* XI. p. 61.

"Now at the end of the night, Chunda, the worker in metals, made ready in his dwelling-place sweet rice and cakes and a quantity of dried boar's flesh. And he announced the hour to the Blessed One, saying, 'The hour, Lord, has come, and the meal is ready.'

"And the Blessed One robed himself early in the morning, and, taking his bowl, went with the brethren to the dwelling-place of Chunda, the worker in metals. When he had come thither, he seated himself in the seat prepared for him. And when he was seated, he addressed Chunda, the worker in metals, and, 'As to the dried boar's flesh you have made ready, serve me with it, Chunda, and as to the other food, the sweet rice and cakes, serve the brethren with it.'"

Having eaten the meal set before him, Buddha addresses his host with words striking for their unconscious humor.

"'Whatever dried boar's flesh, Chunda, is left over to thee, that bury in a hole. I see no one, Chunda, on earth nor in Mara's heaven, nor in Brahma's heaven, no one among Samanas and Brahmanas, among gods and men, by whom when he has eaten it, that food can be assimilated, save by the Tathagata.' 'Even so, Lord!' said Chunda, the worker in metals, in assent, to the Blessed One. And whatever dried boar's flesh remained over, that he buried in a hole.

"And he went to the place where the Blessed One was; and when he had come there took his seat respectfully on one side. And when he was seated, the Blessed One instructed and aroused and incited and gladdened Chunda, the worker in metals, with religious discourse. And the Blessed One then rose from his seat and departed thence."[1]

[1] *S. B. E.* XI. pp. 71–72.

In consequence of this meal, Buddha is seized with illness accompanied with intense pain, but mindful and self-possessed, he bears it without complaint, and sets out for Kusinara.

"Now the Blessed One went aside from the path to the foot of a certain tree; and when he had come there, he addressed the venerable Ananda, and said: 'Fold, I pray you, Ananda, the robe, and spread it out for me. I am weary, Ananda, and must rest awhile!'

"'Even so, Lord!' said the venerable Ananda, in assent to the Blessed One, and spread out the robe folded fourfold.

"And the Blessed One seated himself on the seat prepared for him; and when he was seated, he addressed the venerable Ananda, and said: 'Fetch me, I pray you, Ananda, some water. I am thirsty, Ananda, and would drink.'"

Ananda asks him to wait until they come to another stream but a short distance away, for several hundred carts have just passed over the stream at hand and have made the water muddy. But Buddha repeats his request, so that Ananda, taking a bowl, goes down to the stream, when, lo! the water, but a moment ago so foul and muddy, is found to be perfectly clear.

The pangs of illness do not dull his delicate consideration for the unsuspecting author of his trouble.

"And the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ananda, and said; 'Now it may happen, Ananda, that some one should stir up remorse in Chunda the smith, saying: 'This is evil to

thee, Chunda, and loss to thee in that when the Tathagata had eaten his last meal from thy provision, then he died."

He bids Ananda comfort Chunda by the thought that there is no greater merit than that which is acquired in offering food to a Buddha, either just before his enlightenment or just before his death.[1]

Ananda, seeing that the end is drawing nigh, clothes his master in robes of burnished gold; but their splendor is paled by the exceeding brightness of his body. Ananda expresses his astonishment:

"'How wonderful a thing it is, Lord, and how marvellous, that the color of the skin of the Blessed One should be so clear, so exceeding bright! For when I placed even this pair of robes of burnished cloth of gold, and ready for wear on the body of the Blessed One, lo! it seemed as if it had lost its splendor.'

"'It is even so, Ananda. Ananda, there are two occasions on which the color of the skin of a Tathagata becomes clear and exceeding bright. What are the two?

"'On the night, Ananda, on which a Tathagata attains to the supreme and perfect insight, and on the night when he passes finally away, in that utter passing away which leaves nothing whatever to remain, on these two occasions the skin of a Tathagata becomes clear and exceeding bright.'"[2]

Having come with a large number of brethren to the Sala-grove near Kusinara, he addresses his favorite disciple: —

[1] *S. B. E.* XI. p. 83.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 81.

"'Spread over for me, I pray you, Ananda, the couch with its head to the north, between the twin Sala-trees. I am weary, Ananda, and would lie down.'

"'Even so, Lord!' said the venerable Ananda, in assent to the Blessed One. And he spread a covering on the couch with its head to the north, between the twin Sala-trees. And the Blessed One laid himself down on his right side, with one leg resting on the other; and he was mindful and self-possessed.

"Now at that time the twin Sala-trees were all one mass of bloom with flowers out of season; and all over the body of the Tathagata these dropped and sprinkled and scattered themselves, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old. And heavenly Mandarava flowers too and heavenly sandal-wood powder came falling from the sky, and all over the body of the Tathagata they descended and sprinkled and scattered themselves, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old. And heavenly music was sounded in the sky, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old. And heavenly songs came wafted from the sky, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old."

Buddha explains the meaning of these prodigies, and says: —

"'Now it is not thus, Ananda, that the Tathagata is rightly honored, reverenced, venerated, held sacred, or revered. But the brother or the sister, the devout man or the devout woman, who continually fulfils all the greater and the lesser duties, who is correct in life, walking according to the precepts, — it is he who rightly honors, reverences, venerates, holds sacred, and reveres the Tathagata with the worthiest homage. Therefore, Ananda, be ye constant in the fulfil-

ment of the greater and the lesser duties, and be ye correct in life, walking according to the precepts; and thus, Ananda, should it be taught.' " [1]

" Now the venerable Ananda went into the vihara, and stood leaning against the lintel of the door, and weeping at the thought, Alas! I remain still but a learner, one who has to work out his own perfection. And the Master is about to pass away from me, he who is so kind! "

Buddha calls Ananda and consoles him.

" ' Enough, Ananda. Do not let yourself be troubled; do not weep! Have I not already, on former occasions, told you that it is in the very nature of all things most near and dear to us that we must divide ourselves from them? . . . For a long time, Ananda, you have been very near to me by acts of love, kind and good, that never varies and is beyond all measure. . . . Be earnest in effort, and you too shall soon be free from the great evils — from sensuality, from individuality, from delusion, and from ignorance.' " [2]

The chief representatives of Kusinara are allowed to pay their respects to the dying Buddha. A mendicant, Subhadda, not of Buddha's order, asks three times of Ananda permission to consult his master, but each time receives the same answer of refusal: " Enough, friend Subhadda, trouble not the Tathagata. The Blessed One is weary."

" Now the Blessed One overheard the conversation of the venerable Ananda with the mendicant Subhadda. And the Blessed One called the venerable Ananda, and said: ' It is enough, Ananda. Do not keep out Subhadda. Subhadda,

[1] *S. B. E.* XI. pp. 86–87. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 95–97.

Ananda, may be allowed to see the Tathagata. Whatever Subhadda may ask of me, he will ask from a desire of knowledge, and not to annoy me. And whatever I may say in answer to his questions, that he will quickly understand.' "

Subhadda is admitted. His mind is enlightened and his doubts solved by the admonition of Buddha. He exclaims: —

"'Most excellent, Lord, are the words of thy mouth, most excellent! Just as if a man were to set up that which is thrown down, or were to reveal that which is hidden away, or were to point out the right road to him who has gone astray, or were to bring a lamp into the darkness, so that those who have eyes can see external forms: — just even so, Lord, has the truth been made known to me, in many a figure, by the Blessed One. And I, even I, betake myself, Lord, to the Blessed One as my refuge, to the truth and to the order. May the Blessed One accept me as a disciple, as a true believer, from this day forth, as long as life endures!' "[1]

"Then the Blessed One addressed the brethren, and said: 'Behold, now, brethren, I exhort you, saying, Decay is inherent in all component things. Work out your salvation with diligence!'

"This was the last word of the Tathagata.

"When the Blessed One died, there arose, at the moment of his passing out of existence, a mighty earthquake, terrible and awe-inspiring; and the thunders of heaven burst forth."[2]

"When the Blessed One died, of those of the brethren who were not yet free from the passions, some stretched out their arms and wept, and some fell headlong on the

[1] *S. B. E.* XI. pp. 103 ff.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 116.

ground, rolling to and fro in anguish at the thought: 'Too soon has the Blessed One died! Too soon has the Happy One passed from existence! Too soon has the light gone out in the world!'"

"But those of the brethren who were free from the passions [the Arahats] bore their grief collected and composed at the thought: 'Impermanent are all component things. How is it impossible that they should not be dissolved?'" [1]

The body of Buddha is properly prepared and laid on the funeral pile for the burning. But, in spite of all efforts, the kindling-wood refuses to take fire. Meanwhile the venerable brother Maha Kassapa arrives with five hundred brethren.

"Then the venerable Maha Kassapa went to the place where the funeral pile of the Blessed One was. And when he had come up to it, he arranged his robe on one shoulder; and bowing down with clasped hands, he thrice walked reverently around the pile; and then, uncovering the feet, he bowed down in reverence at the feet of the Blessed One."

The five hundred brethren do the same.

"And when the homage of the venerable Maha Kassapa and of those five hundred brethren was ended, the funeral pile of the Blessed One caught fire of itself." [2]

The bone relics are divided into eight portions, and taken to as many different cities, where mounds (stupas) are built to preserve them as objects of worship.

[1] *S. B. E* XI. p. 117. [2] *Ibid.* p. 129.

If we eliminate the miraculous from the records of Buddha's career, how much of the residue can we accept as reliable information? The answer to this question is not easy. The historical basis on which the biography of Buddha rests is not to be compared with that which belongs to the personality and life-work of our blessed Saviour. The *Book of the Great Decease* is, at the very least, a century and a half later than the events it describes, and the authorities for the earlier portions of Buddha's life are much later still. Hence the opportunities for legendary growths were ample. But confining our attention to the oldest Suttas and Vinaya texts which treat of Buddha's missionary career, we shall not go far astray, if we take much of what is recorded of him to be at least typical of his character and of his work. Not all the anecdotes told of him may be historically true. But of his reputed sayings and arguments the substance is doubtless in great part his. When we consider how profound must have been the influence he exercised on his generation, when we bear in mind that he spent the best part of his long life in building up the system that was to immortalize his name, that by years of intimate association he had made his disciples thoroughly familiar with his religious views, his disposition, and his habits of life, we need not deem it likely that in the memory of those who carried on his work of zeal, his character, words, and deeds should quickly fade away. In

these earlier traditions, we have, in the main, a fair indication both of the man and of his method of teaching.

There is something inspiring in that man of high birth and fine culture, leaving all the world holds dear, to bend his life's energies to the unselfish task of making known to suffering humanity the precious deliverance he thought he had discovered. In his idea of salvation he missed the mark, but he was none the less sincere. It was this sincerity, coupled with true greatness of soul, that carried him to the successful accomplishment of his plans. None but a great and strong soul, none but a lofty and commanding personality, could have exerted so powerful an influence on his contemporaries and on succeeding generations. In the eyes of his admiring followers, he was sinless, free from all defects, adorned with every grace of mind and heart. We may hesitate before taking the highly colored portrait of Buddhist tradition for the exact representation of the original. But we may credit him all the same with the qualities of a good and great man. The records depict him moving about from place to place, regardless of comfort, calm and fearless, mild and compassionate, considerate towards men of every walk of life, absorbed with the one idea of freeing them from the bonds of misery, and irresistible in the eloquence and skill of argument with which he set forth the way of deliverance. In his mildness, his readiness to overlook

insults, his zeal, his chastity, his simplicity of life, he reminds one not a little of Saint Francis of Assisi. In all pagan antiquity, no character has been depicted more noble and more winsome. If the portrait is in advance of the original, it is nevertheless of great value, as setting forth the Buddhist conception of the ideal man.

CHAPTER II

THE LAW, DHAMMA

Deliverance from suffering the aim of Buddhism — THE FOUR GREAT TRUTHS — (1) The truth of suffering — Buddhist pessimism — (2) The cause of suffering: desire and ignorance — Karma and re-birth — (3) The extinction of suffering through the extinction of desire — Nirvana, of the living, of the dead — The Buddhist view of the soul — The joyful element in Buddhism — Nirvana supplemented by the Brahman paradise, swarga — The latter the more popular conception — (4) The eightfold path to Nirvana — Comparison of the Buddhist with the Brahman standard of ethics — The five great duties — Attitude of Buddhism towards suicide — Gentleness and forgiveness of injuries — Examples of Buddhist wisdom.

THE sum and substance of Buddha's teaching, known as Dhamma, the Law, centred about one supremely important point, namely, deliverance from suffering.

"As the great sea, O disciples, is permeated with but one taste, the taste of salt, so also, O disciples, this doctrine and this law are pervaded with but one taste, the taste of deliverance."[1]

To set men free from the sufferings of conscious existence was the great end for which Buddha toiled.

[1] H. Oldenberg, *Buddha, His Life, His Doctrines, His Order*, p. 265. The quotations drawn from this admirable work are versions of texts not to be found in the *Sacred Books of the East.*

To accomplish this purpose, to lead men to everlasting rest, he had to win their assent to the four Great Truths concerning Suffering, the Cause of suffering, the Extinction of suffering, and the Path leading to the extinction of suffering. It is under these four heads that Buddha's law is summed up. Let us examine them one by one.

The first truth was the truth of suffering.

"This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth of suffering: birth is suffering; decay is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering. Presence of objects we hate is suffering; separation from objects we love is suffering; not to obtain what we desire is suffering. Briefly, the fivefold clinging to existence is suffering." [1]

Life in all its forms is suffering and is not worth living. This pessimistic view, the fruit of Brahman pantheistic speculation, finds expression in language almost identical with what we find in the Upanishads. The body is held in the same morbid contempt.

"Look at the dressed-up lump, covered with wounds, joined together, sickly, full of many thoughts, which has no strength, no hold! This body is wasted, full of sickness, and frail; this heap of corruption breaks to pieces; life indeed ends in death. Those white bones, like gourds thrown away in the autumn, what pleasure is there in looking at them? After a stronghold has been made of the bones, it is covered with flesh and blood, and there dwell in it old age and death, pride and deceit." [2]

[1] *Mahavagga*, i. 6, 19. — *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 95.

[2] *Dhammapada*, 146–150. — *S. B. E.* X. p. 41. Cf. *S. B. E.* X. Pt. ii. p. 32.

In the world of life and action, all is impermanent and subject to decay, all is disappointment and bitterness, vanity and vexation of spirit.

"There are five things which no Samana or Brahman and no god, neither Mara, nor Brahma, nor any being in the universe can bring about. What five things are these? That what is subject to old age should not grow old; that what is subject to sickness should not be sick; that what is subject to death should not die; that what is subject to decay should not decay; that what is liable to pass away, should not pass away: — this can no Samana bring about, nor any Brahman, nor any god, neither Mara nor Brahman nor any being in the universe."[1]

Life is thus strongly flavored with the bitterness of disappointment, of fear, of anxiety, of pain, of sorrow, of loss, of decay. And of this misery there is no end; for as soon as one wretched life is ended, another follows in its place.

"The pilgrimage of beings, my disciples, has its beginning in eternity. No opening can be discovered, from which proceeding, creatures mazed in ignorance, fettered by a thirst for being, stray and wander. What think ye, disciples, whether is more, the water which is in the four oceans, or the tears which have flowed from you and have been shed by you while you strayed and wandered on this long pilgrimage, and sorrowed and wept because that was your portion which ye abhorred, and that which ye loved was not your portion? A mother's death, a father's death, a brother's death, a sister's death, a son's death, a daughter's death, the loss of relations,

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. p. 217.

the loss of property,—all this ye have experienced through long ages. And while ye experienced this through long ages, more tears have flowed from you and have been shed by you, while you strayed and wandered on this long pilgrimage, and sorrowed and wept . . . than all the water which is in the four oceans." [1]

What is the fundamental cause of this misery of life? The answer to this question constitutes the second of the four great truths.

"This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the cause of suffering: thirst that leads to rebirth, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finding its delight here and there. [This thirst is threefold], namely, thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence, thirst for prosperity." [2]

The source of the mischief thus lies in the will. It is the desire to live, to preserve one's individual existence, the desire to satisfy the cravings of sensual nature, the thirst for name and wealth and power, that subjects man to the endless round of rebirths with their unavoidable accompaniments of decay, impermanence, sickness, misery.

But is desire, after all, the ultimate source of rebirth and its attendant misery? It seems not; for in the abstruse chain of cause and effect which it was the duty of every perfect monk to understand, ignorance is put down as the primary cause of suffering. This chain, which scholars find hard to explain, runs as follows: —

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. pp. 216–217. [2] *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 95.

"From Ignorance spring the Sankharas.
"From the Sankharas springs Consciousness.
"From Consciousness spring Name and Form.
"From the Name and Form spring the Six Provinces [of the six senses].
"From the six Provinces springs Contact.
"From Contact springs Sensation.
"From Sensation springs Thirst [or Desire].
"From Thirst springs Attachment.
"From Attachment springs Existence.
"From Existence springs Birth.
"From Birth spring Old Age and Death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection, and despair." [1]

If we ask what is this ignorance which lies at the root of all suffering, we are told, the ignorance of the great four truths. It is the "delusion which conceals from man the true being and the true value of the system of the universe. Being is suffering: but ignorance totally deceives us as to this suffering: it causes us to see instead of suffering, a phantom of happiness and pleasure." [2]

In thus attributing the origin of misery to ignorance and desire, Buddha was practically in harmony with the Upanishad teaching, according to which ignorance of one's identity with Brahman gave rise to the desire for individual existence with its attendant misery. But while the pantheistic Brahman laid chief

[1] *Mahavagga*, i. 1, 2. — *S. B. E.* XIII. pp. 75–77.
[2] Oldenberg, Op. cit. p. 241.

stress on ignorance, Buddha seems to have emphasized desire, as the principal cause of rebirth and suffering.

In connection with this, we may note another point of doctrine for which Buddha was indebted to Brahmanic theology. It is the doctrine of *karma*. Like the Brahman, Buddha recognized that in the unceasing chain of births, the character of each successive existence of the individual was the net result of his good and evil deeds in the preceding life. Grades of punishment proportionate to the degree of guilt awaited the sinner at death, varying from rebirth as a man of lower caste down to a life of appalling but limited duration in one of the numerous hells. On the other hand, various other forms of existence on earth and in heaven were the expected rewards of those who, though not yet ripe for Nirvana, acquitted themselves as men of virtue. This inheritance of a sanction after death of good and evil deeds — presupposing, in the last analysis, belief in man's dependence on a supernatural being — is one of the incongruities of Buddhism.

It was the aim of popular Brahmanism to help man to ward off by suitable penance the sad consequences of his transgressions and attain a happy existence in heaven.

Buddhism, on the contrary, sought, like the Upanishad pantheism, to secure for man liberation from all individual, conscious existence, even life in heaven;

for all forms of individual existence were held to be impermanent, subject to decay and suffering.

This brings us to the third great truth as set forth by Buddha, that of the extinction of suffering.

"This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering: [it ceases with] the complete cessation which consists in the absence of every passion — with the abandoning of this thirst, with the doing away with it, with the deliverance from it, with the destruction of desire." [1]

Here again, the strongly developed ethical character of Buddhism asserts itself. The pantheistic Brahman said: recognize your identity with the god Brahman and you thereby cease to be a creature of desires, you are no longer subject to rebirths. He laid chief stress on the act of the intellect.

Buddha, on the contrary, puts abstruse speculation in the background, and insists on the saving act of the will, the suppression of all desire, as the one thing needful.

With the pantheist, salvation is chiefly through knowledge. With the Buddhist, it is chiefly through volition. Yet the value of right knowledge is not overlooked.

"While he thus knows and apprehends [the four sacred truths], his soul is freed from the calamity of desire, freed from the calamity of becoming, freed from the calamity of error, freed from the calamity of ignorance. In the delivered there arises the knowledge of his deliverance, ended

[1] *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 95.

is rebirth, fulfilled the law, duty done; no more is there any returning to this world: this he knows." [1]

What is this extinction of desire which leads to extinction of suffering? Is it the extinction of lust, of consuming ambition, of every selfish, unbridled craving that finds its satisfaction in sin? It is this but not this only. The extinction of evil desires will save a man from the punishments of vile rebirths, but it will not release him from the misery of existence. To this end, the extinction is needed of all desire save, perhaps, that of being rid of miserable existence itself. Deliverance from rebirth and its attendant suffering seems to have been a legitimate object of yearning. But to attain this great end, all other forms of desire must be absolutely quenched, — the natural cravings for the solace and comforts of married life, the desire for lawful pleasures and satisfactions of all kinds, the desire even to preserve one's conscious existence. It is only in the extinction of every desire that cessation of misery is to be attained. It is this state of absence of desire and of pain which is known as *Nirvana* (Nibbana).

The word Nirvana was not coined by Buddha. It was already current. Yet in the mind of Buddha it doubtless assumed a new shade of meaning. In the new religion it conveyed the notion of complete repose, of perfect freedom from desire and pain.

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. p. 263.

The word Nirvana means a "blowing out," an extinction, primarily, of the fire of desire, of ill-will, of delusion, of all, in short, that binds the individual to rebirth and misery. In this sense, it is the possession of every follower of Buddha as soon as he has fully mastered the four sacred truths and thereby attained to the perfection of the arhat. "The disciple who has put off lust and desire, rich in wisdom, has here on earth attained the deliverance from death, the rest, the Nirvana, the eternal state."[1] It was thus, in the living saint, a state of calm repose, of indifference to life and death, to pleasure and pain, a state of imperturbable tranquillity, where the sense of freedom from the bonds of rebirth caused the discomforts, as well as the joys, of life to sink into insignificance. It was the state which enabled one of Buddha's prominent disciples to say: "I long not for death, I long not for life, I wait till my hour comes, like a servant waiting for his reward; I long not for death, I long not for life, I wait till my hour comes, alert and with watchful mind."[2]

Between this form of Nirvana as attained by the perfected Buddhist before death, and the tranquillity of soul of the Brahman ascetic after recognizing fully his identity with Brahman, there is little difference. Of the latter it is said: "Let him not desire to die, let him not desire to live; let him wait for [his ap-

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. p. 264.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 265.

pointed] time as a servant [waits] for the payment of his wages."[1]

But it is not till the Buddhist arhat has passed from earthly existence that Nirvana is realized in its completeness. In this strict sense, it implies much more than a peaceful indifference to pleasure and pain. He who has entered into Nirvana through death has no longer any conscious existence, nothing resembling the life of men or of gods. "The body of the Perfect One, O disciples," runs an old text concerning Buddha, "subsists, cut off from the stream of becoming. As long as his body subsists, so long will gods and men see him. If his body be dissolved, his life run out, gods and men shall no more behold him."[2]

When asked the meaning of the cloud of smoke which flurried about the corpse of the arhat Godhika, Buddha is made to say: "That is Mara, the wicked One, O disciples; he is looking for the noble Godhika's consciousness. But the noble Godhika has entered into Nirvana; his consciousness nowhere remains."[3]

Eternal, unconscious repose — such is the state of Nirvana. Such, too, was the state of absorption in Brahman, the goal towards which the pantheist directed his religious thought and action. The beatific state to which the latter aspired implied

[1] *Manu*, vi. 45.
[2] Oldenberg, Op. cit. p. 266.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 266.

eternal existence of identity with Brahman. Did Nirvana likewise imply continuity of existence or did it mean annihilation?

Many scholars have taken Nirvana to be synonymous with annihilation. And, in truth, if the psychological speculations found in the sacred books are part of Buddha's personal teaching, it is hard to see how he could have held aught else as the supreme goal of noblest endeavor.

According to these speculations, there is no such thing in man as a permanent soul, surviving after death and preserving one's personality unchanged. Every individual is a compound of various elements which admit of classification into five groups: (1) bodily form, (2) sensations, (3) perceptions, (4) conformations (*sankharas*, inner workings of intellect and will), (5) consciousness. None of these by itself constitutes the ego, which is the joint product of all combined, just as the chariot is a complex unit not to be identified with any one of its component parts.[1] The proportions in which these constituent elements combine vary in each individual, being determined by the karma resulting from his previous existence. At death they fall away, to be forthwith succeeded by a new combination. The element of consciousness seems to be the connecting thread running through the constant succession of new existences, but in

[1] Cf. *Questions of King Milanda*, ii. 1, 1. — *S. B. E.* XXXV. pp. 42 ff.

reality each new combination gives rise to a different personality. The logical result of this philosophy is that when in Nirvana these constituent elements part company, never to be recombined into a new ego, there is no further existence, but absolute annihilation.

If Buddha really held this view of human personality, he carefully abstained in his teaching from drawing its logical conclusion. Neither did he declare Nirvana to be, as some scholars think, "the very perfection of existence, the beatitude of repose beyond comparison with earthly joys."[1] The researches of Professor Oldenberg and others have made it clear that, in the beginning, positive teaching on the nature of Nirvana after death was expressly avoided.

When asked by the venerable disciple Malukya, in the most direct manner, whether he, the Perfect One, would live or not after death, Buddha refused to give any information, on the ground that it was irrelevant, not conducive to peace and enlightenment. It was sufficient to know the four truths, and hence that Nirvana was liberation from suffering. "Therefore, Malukya, whatsoever has not been revealed by me, let that remain unrevealed; and what has been revealed, let it be revealed."[2]

On another occasion a wandering monk, not of his order, asked him two questions: "Is there the ego?

[1] Cf. Max Müller, in his introduction to *Buddhaghosha's Parables*, by T. Rogers.

[2] Oldenberg, Op. cit. pp. 275–276.

Is there not the ego?" These questions Buddha met with absolute silence. When asked later by his faithful disciple Ananda why he had not answered, Buddha replied that to have said "the ego is" would have confirmed the heretical doctrine of the permanence of things, while to have said "the ego is not" would have confirmed the doctrine of those who believed in annihilation. It would have caused the monk to be thrown from one bewilderment into another: "My ego did not exist before? But now it exists no longer." [1]

To pronounce, then, either upon the existence or upon the non-existence of those who entered into Nirvana was declared wrong by Buddha. As was the teaching of the Master, so was that of his intimate disciples.

A monk, who interpreted Nirvana to mean annihilation, was taken to task by the venerable Sariputta, who by a series of pointed questions convinced him that he had no right to hold such a view, since the subject was involved in mystery. [2]

The answer which the nun Khema made to the King of Kosala, when inquiring about the existence of the deceased Buddha, was in a similar vein. Whether the Perfect One exists after death, whether he does not exist after death, whether he exists and at the same time does not exist after death, whether he neither exists nor does not exist after death, has

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. pp. 272–273. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 281–282.

not been revealed by Buddha. Why not? Because the existence of the Perfect One is a subject too deep to be fathomed, like the ocean. "'The Perfect One exists after death,' this is not apposite; 'The Perfect One does not exist after death,' this is also not apposite; 'The Perfect One at the same time exists and does not exist after death,' this is also not apposite; 'The Perfect One neither does nor does not exist after death,' this also is not apposite."[1]

Since, then, the nature of Nirvana was too mysterious to be grasped by the Hindu mind, too subtile to be expressed in terms either of existence or non-existence, it is idle to attempt a positive solution of the question left purposely unanswered by Buddha. It suffices to know that it meant a state of unconscious repose, of endless tranquillity, undisturbed by feelings of joy or sorrow. Between such a state and that of positive annihilation, there is practically nothing to choose. The Buddhist ideal is that of an eternal sleep which knows no awakening. In this respect it is practically one with the ideal of the pantheistic Brahman.

A religious system that persuades its votaries that life at its best is not worth living, that offers as its highest consolation an eternity of unconscious repose, seems melancholy enough in our eyes. Its natural fruit would seem to be pessimism and despair. Yet with the Indian Buddhist it was not so. For him,

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. pp. 278–280.

liberation from the misery of individual existence was a consummation devoutly to be wished. Nirvana was the *summum bonum*. It was to him what heaven is to the zealous Christian, — the one great object of yearning and of hope. And so the dominant tone in Buddhism is that of joy.

"Let us live happily, then, free from ailments among the ailing! . . . Let us live happily, then, though we can call nothing our own! We shall be like the brightest gods feeding on happiness! . . . Health is the greatest of gifts, contentedness the best riches; trust is the best of relationships; Nirvana the highest happiness." [1]

But the recognition of this heroic ideal by Buddha's followers does not mean that it was for all alike an object of enthusiastic longing. As may well be imagined, only the more resolute souls bent their energies to the stern task of attaining at death to Nirvana. It is only of the noble few that the Buddhist verse holds true: "Even in heavenly pleasures he finds no satisfaction, the disciple who is fully awakened delights only in the destruction of all desires." [2]

Buddha's system conveniently provided for those who accepted in theory the teaching that Nirvana alone was the true end of man, but who still lacked the courage to cut aloof from all individual existence. The various heavens of Brahman theology, with their

[1] *Dhammapada*, 198, 200, 204. — *S. B. E.* X. pp. 53, 55.
[2] *Dhammapada*, 187. — *S. B. E.* X. p. 51.

positive, even sensual, delights were retained as the reward of virtuous souls not yet ripe for Nirvana. To aspire after such rewards was permitted to the lukewarm monk; it was commended to the layman. Hence the frequent reference, even in the earliest Buddhist scriptures, to heaven (swarga) and to future delights as an encouragement to right conduct.

"Follow the law of virtue! The virtuous rest in bliss in this world and in the next." "This world is dark, few only can see here; a few only go to heaven, like birds escaped from the net." "The uncharitable do not go to the world of the gods." "Some people are born again; evil-doers go to hell; righteous people go to heaven; those who are free from all worldly desires attain Nirvana." [1]

Buddha himself is made responsible for the statement that they who die on a pilgrimage to the four holy places "shall be reborn after death, when the body shall dissolve, in the happy realms of heaven." [2]

Sufficient prominence is not generally given to this more popular side of Buddhist teaching, without which the followers of Buddha would have been limited to an insignificant and short-lived band of heroic souls. It is this element, so prominent in the inscriptions of Asoka, that tempered the severity of Buddha's doctrine of Nirvana and made his religion acceptable to the masses. It was destined in course of time to triumph over the primitive notion of

[1] *Dhammapada*, 168, 174, 177, 126.

[2] *Book of the Great Decease*, v. 22. — *S. B. E.* XI. p. 91. *Vide infra*, pp. 127, 134.

Nirvana itself, reducing it to a heaven of positive and never-ending delights.

But how was man to attain to the extinction of desire and thus share in the supreme bliss of Nirvana? The answer is found in the last of the four great truths.

"This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the path which leads to the cessation of suffering, that holy eightfold path, that is to say, right belief, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right means of livelihood, right endeavor, right memory, right meditation." [1]

In this eightfold path, we have an abstract summary of the laws of conduct to which every one aspiring to Nirvana should conform. They fall naturally under two heads: first, those belonging to the domain of morals; secondly, those touching on discipline. The latter division will be sufficiently treated when we speak of the Order, the Sangha. It is chiefly to the ethical code recognized by Buddha that we now turn our attention.

If we compare the ethical code of Buddha with that recognized in the Brahman law-books, we note two chief points of difference. The first is the absence in Buddhism, to a large extent, of those puerile precepts and prohibitions that must have made life under the old religion so irksome. The second is the severe, though logical, attitude which Buddha took towards married life. With the excep-

[1] *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 95.

tion of these two points, Buddhist ethics differ but little from those of Brahmanism. If we may trust the evidence drawn from Buddhist sources, the Brahmans of Buddha's day were far from exhibiting in their manner of life the realization of the high moral standard we find in the *Laws of Manu*. The followers of Buddha, fired by the enthusiasm of the new movement, gave examples of moral earnestness that put the Brahmans to the blush and told strongly in favor of the Buddhist claims. Yet, in theory, the moral code of Buddhism was little more than a copy of that of Brahmanism.

Buddhist morality, like the Brahman, did not consist in mere outward conformity to the standard of right and wrong. It had its source in the will. A man's thoughts, no less than his words and deeds, formed the basis of his moral worth.

This important ethical truth finds abundant expression in the Buddhist scriptures, notably in the Buddhist book of proverbs known as the *Dhammapada* (Path of the Law).

"All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded in our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. . . . If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him."[1]

[1] *Dhammapada*, 1–2. *S. B. E.* X. pp. 3 and 4.

"Let the wise man guard his thoughts, for they are difficult to perceive, very artful, and they rush wherever they list: thoughts well guarded bring happiness." [1]

"Even the gods envy him whose senses, like horses well broken in by the driver, have been subdued, who is free from pride, and free from appetites. . . . His thought is quiet, quiet are his word and deed, when he has obtained freedom by true knowledge." [2]

"Not nakedness, nor platted hair, nor dirt, nor fasting, nor lying on the ground, nor rubbing with dust, nor sitting motionless can purify a mortal who has not overcome desire." [3]

The five great duties, constituting the "fivefold uprightness" are an echo of Brahman teaching. They are: (1) not to kill any living creature; (2) not to steal; (3) not to act unchastely; (4) not to lie; (5) not to drink intoxicating liquors.

The lawfulness of hastening one's entrance into Nirvana by suicide would seem to be a natural deduction from the pessimistic premises laid down by Buddha; and in fact there are a few instances on record of Buddhist arhats dying by their own hands without any blame attaching to their conduct. But these instances are rare exceptions. To incite anyone to take his own life was an offence rendering a monk liable to expulsion from the community.

"Whatsoever Bhikkhu shall knowingly deprive of life a human being, or shall seek out an assassin against a human

[1] *Dhammapada*, 36. *S. B. E.* X. p. 12.
[2] *Ibid.* 94 and 96, p. 28. [3] *Ibid.* 147, p. 38.

being, or shall utter the praises of death, or incite another to self-destruction, saying, 'Ho! my friend! what good do you get from this wicked, sinful life? Death is better to thee than life!' — if, so thinking, and with such an aim, he, by various argument, utter the praises of death or incite another to self-destruction — he too is fallen into defeat, he is no longer in communion." [1]

Lust, covetousness, envy, pride, harshness, are fittingly condemned. But what, perhaps, brings Buddhism most strikingly in contact with Christianity, is its spirit of gentleness and forgiveness of injuries. To cultivate benevolence towards men of all classes, to avoid anger and physical violence, to be patient under insult and injury, to return good for evil, all this was inculcated in Buddhism and helped to make it one of the gentlest of religions. Buddha did not originate this notion of gentleness and forgiveness of wrongs. It already existed in Brahmanic teaching. But in Buddhism it seems to have been brought into greater prominence.

"Let a man leave anger, let him forsake pride, let him overcome all bondage! . . . He who holds back rising anger like a rolling chariot, him I call a real driver; other people are but holding the reins. Let a man overcome anger by love; let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome greed by liberality, the liar by truth! Speak the truth, do not yield to anger; give, if thou art asked for little; by these three steps thou wilt go near the gods." [2]

[1] *Patimokkha.* — *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 4.
[2] *Dhammapada*, 221–224. Cf. 231–234.

The following thoughts from the *Dhammapada* are further illustrations of Buddhist wisdom in its highest form.

"Let no man make light of evil, saying in his heart: it will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops, a water-pot is filled. The fool becomes full of evil, even if he gather it little by little." [1]

"If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors." [2]

"Better the life of one day, if a man is virtuous and reflecting, than that of a hundred years, if he is vicious and unrestrained." [3]

"A man is not an elder, because his hair is gray. His age may be ripe, but he is called Old-in-vain. He in whom there is truth, virtue, love, restraint, moderation, he who is free from impurity and is wise, he is called an elder." [4]

"It is easy to see another's faults, it is hard to see one's own. A man winnows his neighbor's faults like chaff, but his own fault he hides, as a cheat hides a bad die from the gambler." [5]

[1] *Dham.* 121. [2] *Ibid.* 103. [3] *Ibid.* 110.
[4] *Ibid.* 260–261. [5] *Ibid.* 252.

CHAPTER III

THE BUDDHIST ORDER, SANGHA

Celibacy exacted of Buddha's followers — Severe attitude towards marriage — Poverty and asceticism also requisite — Excessive austerities avoided — Alms the means of subsistence: hence the name Bhikkhus — Neither manual labor nor works of charity in harmony with Buddhist discipline — Distinctions of birth ignored — Buddha not a social reformer — The Novitiate — Rite of initiation — Rule of life — Clothing and food — Avoidance of luxuries and worldly amusements — Cleanliness exacted — Precautions to be observed in traversing the village and in the presence of women — The rite of confession, the Patimokkha — The retreat during the rainy season, Vassa — Meditation — Grades of perfection — Bhikkhunis — The lay element in Buddhism.

THE extinction of suffering through the extinction of desire is the keynote of Buddhism. The path to Nirvana was marked by the gravestones, not only of every unworthy passion, but of every legitimate desire of human nature. The perfect life, of which Buddha set the example and to which he invited his fellow-men, was a life of celibacy and asceticism.

It was first of all a life of celibacy. Conjugal life, being founded on the reproductive instinct, was incompatible with the quenching of desire and the ex-

tinction of individual existence. Hence detachment from family life was the first requisite of a true follower of Buddha.

The attitude which Buddha took towards marriage was excessively derogatory and severe. "A man should avoid married life," he taught, "as if it were a burning pit of live coals."[1] A converted householder is represented as saying: —

> "Full of hindrances is the household life, a path defiled by passion: free as the air is the life of him who has renounced all earthly things. How difficult it is for the man who dwells at home to live the higher life in all its fulness, in all its purity, in all its bright perfection! Let me then cut off my hair and beard, let me clothe myself in orange-colored robes, and let me go forth from a household life into the homeless state!"[2]

But detachment from family life was not the only sacrifice demanded of Buddha's followers. They had to stand aloof from all that binds the heart to individual existence; they had to give up worldly possessions, and worldly power, to detach themselves from everything that could minister to pride and softness and ease. They had, in a word, to live a life of poverty and asceticism.

It is easy to see in all this the influence of Brahman asceticism. Still, in exacting of his followers a life of

[1] *Dhammika Sutta*, 21. Quoted by Monier Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 88.

[2] *Tevijja Sutta*, i. 47.—*S. B. E.* XI. p. 187.

severe simplicity, Buddha did not go to the extremes of fanaticism which characterized most of the ascetics of his day. He chose a more rational course, which excluded a life of unrelenting austerity no less than one of ease and abundance. In his first sermon preached at Benares to the ascetics who had been his former companions in the practice of excessive mortifications, he said: —

"There are two extremes, O Bhikkhus, which he who has given up the world ought to avoid. What are these two extremes? A life given to pleasure, devoted to pleasures and lusts: this is degrading, sensual, vulgar, ignoble, and profitless; and a life given to mortifications: this is painful, ignoble, and profitless. By avoiding these two extremes, O Bhikkhus, the Tathagata has gained the knowledge of the middle path, which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the Sambodhi, to Nirvana." [1]

In an interesting dialogue between Buddha and a monk who, in his reaction from a life of undue asceticism, was tempted to adopt the opposite extreme of reckless enjoyment, the middle path of moderate asceticism is compared to a lute which gives forth the proper tones only when the strings are neither too tight nor too slack.[2]

To secure perfect detachment from the world, Buddha adopted for himself and his followers the

[1] *Mahavagga*, i. 6, 17.—*S. B. E.* XIII. p. 94.
[2] *S. B. E.* XVII. p. 7.

quiet, secluded, contemplative life practised by the ascetics of his day. Their means of subsistence was alms; hence the name commonly applied to Buddhist monks,[1] *Bhikkhus*, beggars, mendicants. It was foreign to his plan that his followers should engage in any works of manual labor or in charitable ministrations to the unfortunate. The traditional contempt of the Brahman for industrial pursuits was largely shared by the Buddhist. Then, too, manual labor would have been productive of riches, would have entangled the aspirant to perfection in worldly cares, and enfeebled him for the great business that demanded his undivided attention, the thorough knowledge and observance of the law.

In like manner, works of charity, such as the care of the sick and destitute, would have been a hindrance to Buddhist perfection. Not indeed that the needs of the sick and helpless were utterly ignored. Through Buddhist influence, centres were established where the suffering could repair for medicine and treatment. But these charitable offices were administered by laymen, not by monks. Nevertheless, there is not in Buddhism that keen sympathy for individual suffering and that corresponding impulse to alleviate it for which Christianity is pre-eminently con-

[1] The application of the Christian terms, monks and nuns, to members of the Buddhist order is regrettable on account of the confusion of thought to which it is apt to lead. But having the sanction of modern usage, it cannot well be avoided.

spicuous. Buddha's chief concern was to teach men to escape the misery of rebirth by the extinction of all desire. Hence the tendency to view present sufferings with indifference. To nurse the sick and minister to the needs of the destitute, would have helped to confirm the afflicted in their delusive attachment to individual existence, the very thing which Buddha sought to undo. It would likewise have been too distracting. The life which Buddha felt to be alone suited to the pursuit of Nirvana was one, not of active participation in the world, but of quiet solitude and contemplation. In the *Tevijja Sutta* the conduct of the Buddhist monk is contrasted with that of certain heretical monks who gain a livelihood "by prescribing medicines to produce vomiting or purging, or to remove obstructions in the higher or lower intestines, or to relieve headache; by preparing oils for the ear, collyriums, catholicons, antimony, and cooling drinks; by practising cautery, midwifery, or the use of root decoctions or salves."[1] The only act of beneficence which Buddha inculcated on his disciples was to preach to others.

Such are the main characteristics of the religious life, if we may call it religious, to which Buddha invited his fellow-men. And in thus opening up what he felt to be the true path of salvation, he made no discrimination of social conditions. Herein lay one of the most striking contrasts between the

[1] *S. B. E.* XI. p. 200.

old religion and the new. Brahmanism was founded on caste-distinctions. Full participation in its advantages belonged to the Brahmans alone. The religious privileges accorded to members of the next two castes, were of an inferior grade, while Sudras, and members of still lower classes, were absolutely excluded.

Buddha, on the contrary, extended the hand of welcome to men of low, as well as high, birth and station. Virtue, not birth, was declared to be the test of superiority. In the brotherhood which he built around him, all caste-distinctions were put aside. The despised Sudra stood on a footing of perfect equality with the high-born Brahman. All were brothers; and if greater esteem attached to some, it was owing to their greater zeal in the practice of virtue. In this religious democracy of Buddhism lay doubtless one of its strongest influences for conversion among the lower masses.

In thus putting his followers, irrespective of birth, on a plane of perfect equality, Buddha had no intention of acting the part of a social reformer. Not a few writers have attributed to him the purpose of breaking down caste-distinctions in society, and of replacing them by a democratic system which would insure a more equitable distribution of privileges. This is a mistake. Buddha had no more intention of abolishing caste than he did of abolishing marriage. It was only within the limits of his own order

that he insisted on social equality, as he did on celibacy. It was not part of his plan to secure the amelioration of the less favored classes. Neither did his followers anywhere pose as social reformers. Wherever Buddhism has prevailed, the caste-system has not been abolished. On the contrary, the later Buddhist scriptures imply the permanence of castes, for it is laid down as a principle that a Buddha is never to be born into a family of the peasant or servile caste, but only as a warrior or as a Brahman.[1]

Let us now look more closely into the mode of life which Buddha prescribed for his followers.

Before being admitted to the full privileges of the *Sangha*, or order of monks, the members had to pass through a period of probation as novices. Although, as has been said, men of every station in life could present themselves as novices, yet those alone were accepted who were free from certain disqualifications. Thus, confirmed criminals were debarred, men afflicted with serious deformities and diseases, debtors, slaves, soldiers whose term of service was not yet ended, sons whose parents had not given their consent. As a rule, the novice had to be at least fifteen years old (from the time of conception), but exceptions were sometimes made in favor of children only twelve years of age.[2]

[1] Cf. Foucaux, *Lalita Vistara*, p. 21; Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 41.

[2] *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 204.

The ceremony of reception was simple. No abjuration of previous religious belief was required. Having cut off his hair and beard, and having put on the yellow robes peculiar to the order, he squatted at the feet of the monks, and, with hands joined above his head, recited three times the Buddhist formula of faith: "I take my refuge in Buddha, I take my refuge in the Law [Dhamma]; I take my refuge in the Order [Sangha]."[1]

He then chose as preceptor a worthy monk of at least ten years' standing, and served under him till his novitiate was ended. The shortest term of probation was four months.

From the beginning the novice had to observe the ten precepts exacted of every Buddhist monk, namely, to abstain from destroying every form of life, from stealing, from unchaste indulgence, from lying, from strong drink, from eating at forbidden times, from dancing or singing, from the use of perfumes, ointments and flowers, from the use of high and broad beds, from accepting gold or silver.[2]

The ceremony by which the novice was received into full membership was somewhat more solemn. Having satisfactorily spent the period of probation, and being at least twenty years old, he appeared with his preceptor before the assembled monks.[3]

[1] *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 115. [2] *Ibid.* p. 211.

[3] It was the rule that at least ten monks should assist at the rite of ordination, but in remote districts four were declared sufficient. *S. B. E.* XVII. pp. 33 and 38.

He adjusted his robe so as to cover one shoulder, and, squatting at their feet, with his hands joined over his head, recited three times the formula of refuge in Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha.

He was then asked the following questions, to which a truthful answer had to be given: —

"Are you afflicted with the following diseases: leprosy, boils, dry leprosy, consumption, and fits?

"Are you a man?

"Are you a male?

"Are you a freeman?

"Have you no debts?

"Are you not in the royal service?

"Have your father and mother given their consent?

"Are you full twenty years old?

"Are your alms-bowl and your robes in due state?

"What is your name?

"What is your preceptor's name?" [1]

If the answers were satisfactory, the preceptor turned to his assembled brethren, announced the worthiness of the candidate, and then three times asked them to show their approval by silence or their disapproval by speaking. If, after the third request, no objection was raised, the candidate was declared a full member of the order. The mode of life to which he had to conform was then briefly rehearsed to him, and he was reminded of the four great prohibitions, whose violation brought expulsion from the order. They were (1) to avoid every form of sexual indul-

[1] *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 230.

gence; (2) to take nothing but what was given to him, not even a blade of grass; (3) not to deprive any creature of life, even a worm or an ant; (4) not to boast of any superhuman perfection.[1]

In thus becoming a member of the order, the monk did not bind himself by any vows. If after a time he came to the conclusion that he was not suited to the severe life he had adopted, he was free to withdraw from the order and to go back to the world. Sometimes after returning to a worldly life, he repented and again sought admission into the order. Such admission was very rarely refused.

The asceticism which Buddha demanded of his followers, while not of extreme rigor, was what we should call severe. Each member was allowed but one set of garments, which had to be of yellow color and of cheap quality. They consisted of a piece of cloth encircling the waist and falling below the knees, of an upper garment covering the back and breast, and of an outer robe. These, together with his sleeping-mat, razor, needle, water-strainer, and alms-bowl, constituted the sum of his worldly possessions. His single meal, which had to be taken before noon, consisted chiefly of bread, rice, and curry, which he gathered daily in his alms-bowl by begging from door to door. Water or rice-milk was his customary drink, wine and other intoxicants being rigorously forbidden, even as medicine. Meat, fish, and delicacies

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. pp. 346-351.

were rarely eaten, except in sickness or when the monk dined by invitation with some patron. "Whatsoever Bhikkhu," runs a Vinaya text, "when he is not sick, shall request for his own use, and shall partake of delicacies, — ghee, butter, oil, honey, molasses, fish, flesh, milk, curds, — that is a Pakittiya" (*i. e.*, an offence requiring a penance).[1]

During the day he had to stand or sit upright with legs crossed. Only at night could he lie down, but not on a high or broad bed. He was forbidden not only to use wreaths, ornaments, and perfumes, but also to take part in worldly amusements. Among the latter were included many that seem innocent enough to our degenerate minds, as the following interesting passage from the *Tevijja Sutta* makes known: —

"Whereas some Samana-Brahmans[2] who live on the food provided by the faithful, continue addicted to occupying their time with games detrimental to their progress in virtue: that is to say, with a board of sixty-four squares, or of one hundred squares; tossing up; hopping over diagrams formed on the ground; removing substances from a heap without shaking the remainder; dicing; trap-ball; sketching rude figures; tossing balls; blowing trumpets; ploughing matches; tumbling; forming mimic wind-mills; guessing at measures; chariot races; archery; shooting marbles from the fingers; guessing other people's thoughts; and mimicking other people's acts; he, on the other hand, refrains from such games detrimental to virtue."[3]

[1] *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 40.
[2] Brahman ascetics.
[3] *S. B. E.* XI. p. 193.

At first, the monks lived in temporary shelters of the rudest kind; for except during the rainy season (from the middle of June to the middle of October) they were constantly moving from place to place. In course of time, parks and gardens were made over to them, and there they erected solid and permanent clusters of cells. Cloisters were thus formed, called *viharas*, but the furnishings were of a very simple kind. Some of these viharas were provided with hot-air baths.[1]

We note with pleasure that Buddhist asceticism was characterized by a scrupulous regard for cleanliness. Dirt and foul smells formed no part of Buddhist sanctity. Every member of the community was expected to bathe once a fortnight, and to keep his garments, sleeping-mat, alms-bowl, and cell in neat condition.[2]

The life which Buddha felt to be alone suited to the pursuit of Nirvana was one, as we have already noted, not of active participation in the world, but of quiet solitude and contemplation. For this reason, his followers, like the Brahman ascetics, were not allowed to live in the villages and towns, but only on the outskirts. They were not even to visit the towns, except in the early morning, when they went in quest of alms.

Contact with worldly life was felt to be a source of

[1] *S. B. E.* XX. p. 103.
[2] *Ibid.* XIII. pp. 44, 157–160; XX. pp. 295–296.

danger for one who was striving after Buddhist perfection. Hence, in his daily rounds through the village, he had to observe the greatest precaution. "As one who has no shoes, walks over thorny ground, watchfully picking his steps, so let the wise man walk in the village." [1] With sober gait and with eyes modestly cast on the ground, he proceeded from door to door, holding out his bowl in silence and receiving the alms without looking on the face of the giver. As soon as his bowl was filled, he made his way back to the convent. He was then expected to examine his conscience to see if his visit to the village was free from blame.

"A monk, Sariputta," Buddha is reported as saying, "must thus reflect: 'On my way to the village, when I was going to collect alms, and in the places where I collected alms, and on my way back from the village, have I in the forms which the eye perceives, the sounds which the ear perceives, . . . experienced pleasure, or desire, or hatred, or distraction, or anger in my mind?' If so, then must this monk, O Sariputta, endeavor to become free from these evil, treacherous emotions. But if the monk, O Sariputta, who submits himself to this test finds: 'I have not experienced pleasure, or desire, or hatred, or distraction, or anger,' then should he be glad and rejoice. Happy the man who has long accustomed his mind to good." [2]

Among the seductive influences of the world against which the true follower of Buddha had to guard himself with utmost vigilance, was association with women.

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. p. 307. [2] *Ibid.*

He was forbidden to converse alone with a woman, however respectable, and all communication with women was to be avoided as far as possible. Characteristic is the advice which Buddha gave Ananda on this subject: "How are we to conduct ourselves, Lord, with regard to womanhood?" "Don't see them, Ananda." "But if we should see them, what are we to do?" "Abstain from speech, Ananda." "But if they should speak to us, Lord, what are we to do?" "Keep wide awake, Ananda."[1]

As a further aid to correctness of conduct, a public examination and confession of faults took place every fortnight, on the days of the new and full moon. At this ceremony, known as the *Patimokkha* (the unburdening), all the monks of the locality had to be present. The meeting was held at evening, and the most venerable monk of the community presided. Having solemnly announced the purpose of the meeting, he proceeded to enumerate the various kinds of offences which it was the duty of every monk to avoid. This list of sins, subject, doubtless, in the beginning to constant variations, became in course of time a stereotyped formula, a sort of liturgical rite, which had to be strictly observed.[2] It was divided into several classes of offences, beginning with the class of transgressions that entailed expulsion from the order, and

[1] *Book of the Great Decease*, v. 23. — *S. B. E.* XI. p. 91. Here again the Buddhist joins hands with the Brahman.

[2] This Patimokkha formula may be found in the first part of Vol. XIII. *S. B. E.*

proceeding to others of less and less consequence. After enumerating the sins comprised in each class, the presiding monk put three times to the assembly this question: "Venerable Sirs, are you pure in this matter?" If no one spoke, it was understood that all present were guiltless. If a monk confessed himself guilty of some one of the offences enumerated, a penalty proportionate to the seriousness of the offence was laid upon him.

Such was the Patimokkha in its original form. But later on, the confession of faults was exacted of the monk outside the Patimokkha. A monk, guilty of some offence, was expected to confess it to a brother monk that very day, and to receive the fitting penance. Every day's delay in confessing increased his guilt and called for a greater penance. It was only after thus unburdening his conscience by private confession of guilt, that he had the right to be present at the Patimokkha.[1]

It is to be remarked that the Buddhist confession had nothing of a sacramental character. Again, only external offences had to be confessed, and of these the majority were infringements of community rules.

Another ceremony having a similar end in view was the public accusation of faults known as the *Pavarana* (invitation). During a period of three months, beginning with June or July, — the rainy season, called

[1] Cf. *S. B. E.* XX. p. 409.

Vassa, — the monks were forbidden to travel, and had to reside together at their various monasteries, spending the time in quiet contemplation. At the end of this period, before setting out again on their wanderings, the monks met in solemn assembly, and each one in turn, raising his clasped hands, asked to be reminded of any faults of his committed during the rainy season that his fellow-monks had observed. "Reverend Sirs," the formula ran, "I invite the order, if ye have seen anything on my part, or have heard anything, or have any suspicion about me, have pity on me, Reverend Sirs, and speak. If I see it, I shall atone for it." [1]

This necessity of making known and atoning for external offences was, doubtless, of great efficacy in securing that observance of outward decorum which Buddha demanded of his followers.

But mere outward observance of the rules of the order was not enough. To enable the members to assimilate the true spirit of the order, to advance interiorly towards the perfection of Nirvana, the practice of profound meditation was enjoined. This practice — the counterpart of the *yoga* of the Brahman ascetic — was adopted by the monks with very unequal degrees of success. One of the surest marks of perfection and of ripeness for entering into Nirvana was the aptitude for sinking one's self into abstract meditation, in which the monk, regardless of everything about

[1] Oldenberg, Op. cit. pp. 374–375. Cf. *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 329.

him, concentrated his mind on the unconditioned state of Nirvana. There were certain rules for bringing on this meditative condition of soul. Selecting some quiet spot, the monk would sit with crossed legs, erect and motionless, dwelling on more and more abstract subjects, till often he sank into a trance. In this morbid state, various hallucinations, mistaken for realities, would affect his mind. He saw heavenly visions and heard heavenly sounds. He peered into the remote past and future, saw what was happening in distant places, and read the thoughts of others.

As we have seen, the object of Buddha's monastic system was to lead men to a state of perfection which at death would secure their entrance into Nirvana. But not all the members of his order attained in their lifetime to this ideal state of perfection. Only some of them succeeded in becoming *arhats*, *i. e.*, perfect ones, free from all rebirth and destined at death to enter into Nirvana. Others attained to a degree of holiness which destined them to a new life with the gods in heaven, to end by absorption into Nirvana. Others were destined to reach the desired goal only after another life on earth.[1] But the more worldly monks were under the necessity of being reborn a number of times before they could hope to acquire perfection. The Buddhist records show that worldly, even vicious, monks were by no means uncommon,

[1] *S. B. E.* XI. pp. 25–26.

and that the peace of the community was often disturbed by them.[1]

It seems to have been Buddha's original intention to confine his monastic system to men. But, yielding to entreaties, he established a supplementary order of nuns (Bhikkhunis). These communities of nuns, while living in the vicinity of the monks, were entirely separated from them. The strictest rules regulated the relations of the one with the other. A monk was forbidden to converse alone with a nun; they could not travel together. Only the monk especially appointed for the purpose could preach to them, and then it was not in their place of habitation, but in the neighborhood of the monastery, where the presence of a second monk was required.

The status of the nun was much inferior in dignity to that of the monk. "A Bhikkhuni," runs one of their eight rules, "even if of a hundred years' standing, shall make a salutation to, shall rise up in the presence of, shall bow down before, and shall perform all proper duties towards, a Bhikkhu, if only just initiated. This is a rule to be revered and reverenced, honored and observed, and during her long life never to be transgressed." [2]

[1] These disturbers of the peace were generally designated as the Khabbaggiya Bhikkhus, Cf. *S. B. E.* XVII. pp. 343–344, 347 ff.; XX. pp. 147, 296.

[2] *S. B. E.* XX. pp. 322–323.

A nun was never allowed to reprove a monk for any misdemeanor, while the monk had always the right to admonish an erring nun.

They had to conform to the same rule of life as that prescribed for monks, living on alms, and leading a life of retirement and contemplation. They were never so numerous as the monks, and became a very insignificant fraction of the Sangha as time went on.

Strictly speaking, Buddha's order was composed only of those who had renounced the world and given proof of their purpose to live a life of contemplation as monks and nuns. But the very character of their life made them dependent for their subsistence on the charity of men and women who preferred to live in the world and to enjoy the comforts of the household state. Those who thus sympathized with the order and helped to contribute to its support, formed the lay element in Buddhism. These lay associates were called *upasakas*, if men, and *upasikas*, if women. Not being monks or nuns, they could not hope to attain to Nirvana at the end of the present life. But through their association with the order, and their acts of beneficence to it, they could ensure for themselves a happy rebirth in the traditional swarga or heaven, with the additional prospect of being able at some future birth to attain to Nirvana if they so desired. The majority, however, did not share the enthusiasm of the Buddhist arhat for Nirvana, being

quite content to look forward to a life of positive, though impermanent, delights in heaven.[1]

To become a upasaka, no rite of initiation was required beyond the simple declaration before a monk of refuge in Buddha, the Law, and the Order. There was no obligation of renouncing the various popular forms of worship. To contribute to the support of the order was their chief duty and their privilege as well. They supplied the monks and nuns with food, clothing, and medicine. They vied with one another in having the monks dine with them at their homes. The more wealthy donated parks, and stood the expense of building suitable cloisters. In return, the monks gladdened them with religious discourses and assured them of abundant rewards for their beneficence.

"Whatsoever woman upright in life, a disciple of the Happy One, gives, glad at heart and overcoming avarice, both food and drink — a heavenly life does she obtain; entering on the path that is free from corruption and impurity, aiming at good, happy does she become and free from sickness, and long does she rejoice in a heavenly body." [2]

These lay brethren were exhorted to observe chastity in keeping with their state of life, to avoid

[1] This accounts for the frequent reference to heaven, and the apparent ignoring of Nirvana in the inscriptions of Asoka, a fact wrongly taken by Senart to imply that the speculations on Nirvana were unknown in Asoka's day. Cf. *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, II. p. 323.

[2] *Mahavagga*, viii. 15, 14. — *S. B. E.* XVII. p. 225.

lying, stealing, the use of intoxicants, and the taking of life, even that of animals. But failure to conform to these precepts of moral conduct did not, except in very flagrant instances, prevent them from enjoying friendly relations with the order. But it was otherwise with those who reviled and slandered the monks or their revered founder, or who openly rejected any point of Buddha's teaching. They were cut off from all association with the monks. Their invitations to dine out were refused, and the alms-bowl was turned down in their presence. But if they apologized for their offensive conduct, they were reinstated in the good-will of the order.

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORY OF BUDDHISM

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENTS — The existence of the Brahman gods recognized in primitive Buddhism, but man's dependence on them denied — Hence no rites of worship — Devotion to the gods tolerated in the Buddhist layman — Rise of religious rites after Buddha's death — Veneration of his relics, stupas, and statues: pilgrimages, processions, and festivals — Worship of the Buddha to come, Metteyya — Divinization of Gotama Buddha as the Adi-Buddha — The Bodhisattvas — Mahayana and Hinayana — The GROWTH OF BUDDHISM — The dubious councils of Rajagriha and Vaisali — Asoka — His rock-inscriptions — His zeal for Buddhism — Unreliable traditions, especially concerning Mahinda and the council of Patna — The introduction of Buddhism into Ceylon — The evangelization of Kashmir, Gandhara, and Bactria — King Menander — King Kanishka — The council of Kashmir — The introduction of Buddhism into China — Chinese pilgrims: Fa Hien and Hiouen Thsang — The character of Chinese Buddhism — Mito and Fousa Kwanyin — The introduction of Buddhism into Tibet — The character of Lamaism — Resemblances to certain features of Catholicism — The spread of Buddhism over Southern Asia — The decline of Buddhism in India — The number of Buddhists greatly exaggerated.

IT may appear strange that in our survey of Buddhism no account has been taken of religious duties and practices. But the fact is that religious duties, in the strict sense, form no part of Buddha's teaching. For the attainment of Nirvana, religious rites were

accounted of no avail, just as in pantheistic Brahmanism they were held to be useless for securing absorption into Brahman. But while the pantheist clung to the Vedas, and insisted on the necessity of Vedic worship as a preparation for the higher religion, Buddha, with greater consistency, rejected both the Vedas and the Vedic rites.

Buddha was not an atheist in the sense that he denied the existence of the gods. Nor can he be called an agnostic. To him the gods were living realities. In his alleged sayings, as in the Buddhist scriptures generally, the gods are often mentioned and always with respect.[1] But like the pantheistic Brahman, he did not acknowledge his dependence on them. They were held to be subject like men to karma and rebirth. The god of to-day might be reborn in the future in some inferior condition, while a man of virtuous conduct might succeed in raising himself in his next birth to the rank of a god in heaven. The very gods, then, no less than men, had need of that perfect wisdom that leads to Nirvana, and hence it was idle to pray or sacrifice to them in the hope of obtaining the boon which they themselves did not possess. They were even inferior to Buddha, since he had already attained to Nirvana. In like manner, they who followed in Buddha's footsteps had no need of worshipping the gods by prayers and offerings.

[1] One of the names of the famous Buddhist king, Asoka, was Devanampiya (dear to the gods).

On the other hand, much as Buddha felt himself above the need of Brahman rites, he looked with indifference, if not with complacency, on the worship of the gods by those who still clung to the delusion of individual existence, and preferred the household to the homeless state. For souls like these, gifts to the gods were after all not wholly in vain, since it lay in the power of the grateful deities to confer benefits in return. This view finds expression in the seemingly incongruous words that Buddha is said to have addressed to two high officials of Magadha: —

"Wheresoe'er the prudent man shall take up his abode,
Let him support there good and upright men of self-control.
Let him give gifts to all such deities as may be there.
Revered, they will revere him; honored, they will honor him again;
Are gracious to him, as a mother to her one, her only son.
And the man who has the grace of the gods, good fortune he beholds." [1]

Bloody sacrifices were abominated by Buddha because they involved the killing of living things; but how far he was from setting himself in bitter antagonism to other features of Brahman worship, is shown by the benediction he pronounced on Keniya, the Brahman ascetic, in which he praises the transcendent excellence of his own religion without disparaging that of his host.

[1] *Book of the Great Decease*, i. 31. — *S. B. E.* XI. p. 20.

"Of the offerings, the fire sacrifice is the chief, of sacred verses, the chief is the Savitthi ; [1]

"Among men the king is chief, and of waters the ocean ;
Of constellations the moon is chief, and of heat-givers the sun ;
But of them, the conquering ones, who long after good, the Sangha verily is chief." [2]

But while worship of the gods was tolerated in the Buddhist layman, it was not inculcated as a duty. It was rather discouraged indirectly by the inferior degree to which it was assigned in the scale of meritorious works. Virtuous conduct and loyal devotion to the Sangha, were taught to be of incomparably greater value than religious rites.

"If a man for a hundred years sacrifice month after month with a thousand, and if he but for one moment pay homage to a man whose soul is grounded [in true knowledge], better is that homage, than a sacrifice for a hundred years." [3]

Benefits derived from the worship of the gods were at best but fleeting. They were not to be esteemed by the monks and nuns, who set their hearts on Nirvana.

This lack of all religious rites in the order was not keenly felt in the presence of their venerable founder. Their intense devotion to him took the place of religious fervor. But he was not long dead when

[1] Pali form of Sanskrit word Savitri.
[2] *Mahavagga*, vi. 35, 8. — *S. B. E.* XVII. p. 134.
[3] *Dhammapada*, 106.

this very devotion to Buddha began to assume the form of religious worship. His reputed relics, consisting of his bones, teeth, alms-bowl, cremation-vessel, and ashes from the funeral pyre, found their way to the chief cities of India, and, being enclosed in dome-shaped mounds, called dagobas, chaityas, topes, or stupas, were honored with offerings of lights, flowers, and perfumes. This was represented to be in accordance with a provision of Buddha himself.

"At the four cross-roads, a dagoba should be erected to the Tathagata. And whosoever shall there place garlands, or perfumes, or paint, or make a salutation there, or become in its presence calm in heart, that shall long be to them a profit and a joy."[1]

Likewise, the places of his birth, supreme enlightenment, first preaching, and death were accounted especially sacred, and became the objects of pious pilgrimages, and the occasion of recurring festivals. To give these rites a greater dignity and importance, the dying Buddha is alleged to have been himself their author. It is he who reminds Ananda of the four places to be visited with feelings of reverence and awe, and says: —

"And there will come, Ananda, to such spots, believers, brethren and sisters of the order, devout men and devout women, and will say, 'Here was the Tathagata born,' or,

[1] *Book of the Great Decease*, v. 26.

'Here did the Tathagata attain to the supreme and perfect insight,' or, 'Here was the Kingdom of righteousness set on foot by the Tathagata,' or, 'Here the Tathagata passed away in that utter passing away which leaves nothing whatever to remain behind.'

"And they, Ananda, who shall die while they with believing heart are journeying on such pilgrimage, shall be reborn after death, when the body shall resolve, in the happy realms of heaven." [1]

Of these places of pilgrimage, the most sacred and the most popular was the spot where he attained to perfect enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree. This tree, a pipala or variety of the fig-tree, became the object of extravagant veneration.

Besides these, pictures and statues of Buddha came into vogue, and were multiplied on every side. Offerings were made to them of lights, flowers, and perfumes. Festivals were instituted at which statues of Buddha were carried about in solemn procession.[2]

But the craving for religious worship was not yet satisfied. Buddha, having entered into Nirvana, could not be conscious of the religious honors that were heaped upon him. The need was felt of a living personality worthy of religious veneration, and at the same time sensible of the honors paid to

[1] *Book of the Great Decease*, v. 16–22.

[2] The fifth Girnar edict of Asoka refers to religious processions. Cf. Senart, *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, I. p. 113. A very good account of Buddha's relics and other objects of veneration is given by K. F. Köppen, *Die Religion des Buddha*, I. pp. 516 ff.

him. Such a personality was brought to light by the later speculations of Buddhist monks. This was Metteyya,[1] the loving one, now living happily as a Bodhisattva in heaven, but destined in the remote future to become a Buddha, and again to set in motion the wheel of the law. For the religion founded by Gotama Buddha was not destined to persist for all time. In this world-age, three Buddhas had preceded him at long intervals of time, and the teachings of each had after a while utterly vanished from the minds of men. So in like manner his order was destined to last only five hundred years.[2] Then would ensue a long reign of darkness and ignorance till Metteyya, the fifth and last Buddha, would appear and renew the work of salvation. To this Metteyya in heaven, the Buddhists turned as the living object of worship of which they had so long felt the need, and they paid him religious homage as the future saviour of the world.

Such was the character of the religious worship observed by those who departed the least from Buddha's teachings. It is what we find to-day in the so-called Southern Buddhism, as held by the inhabitants of Ceylon, Burma, and Siam.

But even devotion to the Bodhisattva Metteyya

[1] Sanskrit, Maitreya.

[2] It would have lasted a thousand years, had not the disciples prevailed upon Buddha to admit women to membership in the order. *Chullavagga*, x. 1, 6. — *S. B. E.* XX. p. 325.

failed in the long run to give satisfaction to the majority of Buddhist believers. The idea of Brahman, the eternal lord of gods and men, came to be transferred to Buddha himself. To reconcile the contradiction between this conception and the Buddha of tradition, the latter, Sakyamuni, was declared to be an incarnation of the eternal and unchanging Buddha, later known as Adi-Buddha, — dwelling in the highest heaven. Around this supreme Buddha were grouped a countless number of Bodhisattvas, destined in future ages to become human Buddhas for the sake of erring man. To raise oneself to the rank of Bodhisattva by virtuous and meritorious works was the ideal now held out to generous souls. Instead of Nirvana, Sukhavati became the object of religious hope, the heaven of sensuous delights, where Amitabha,[1] an emanation of the eternal Buddha, happily reigned. For the attainment of this end, the necessity of virtuous conduct was not altogether forgotten, but an extravagant importance was attached to the worship of relics and statues, to pilgrimages, and above all to the reciting of sacred names and magic formulæ. Many other gross forms of Hindu superstition were also adopted.

This innovation, so utterly foreign to the teaching of Buddha, took its rise in Northern India about the first century B. C. It was known as the *Mahayana*

[1] The Buddhist substitute for Yama, the lord of the Brahman paradise.

or Great Vehicle, in distinction from the earlier form of Buddhism contemptuously styled the *Hinayana* or Little Vehicle.[1]

The new movement grew apace, and in the next few centuries supplanted the older Buddhism in Northern India, Kashmir, and Bactria. The Buddhist order thus became separated into two great schisms, the Mahayana or Buddhism of the North, and the Hinayana or Buddhism of the South.

It was this Northern Buddhism that was propagated in China, Japan, Tartary, and Tibet, the very countries that furnish to-day the overwhelming majority of Buddhists. But they are Buddhists in name only, adhering to forms of religious belief and practice in open contradiction to what Buddha took pains to inculcate. It is only by the few millions of Southern Buddhists that primitive Buddhism has been even fairly preserved.

For more than two centuries after the death of Buddha, nothing positive is known of the history of the religion that he founded. The later Buddhist scriptures tell how a council of five hundred monks was held at Rajagriha in the summer following Buddha's death, to give a fixed and authoritative expression to his dogmatic and disciplinary teachings; also how, a century later, another council of seven hundred

[1] According to some, it was called the Great Vehicle because it opened up the highest salvation to laymen as well as to monks, whereas the Little Vehicle held out Nirvana to monks alone.

monks convened at Vaisali, to suppress the lax innovations that threatened the integrity of Buddhist discipline. But the historical character of these accounts as found in the last two chapters of the *Chullavagga* and elsewhere is called in question by many.[1]

That Buddha's order must have grown rapidly and soon become conspicuous in Northern India is very likely; for in the third century B.C., we find it in a flourishing condition, enjoying the patronage of those in power. The fact that Buddha came himself from the caste of warriors, and the welcome extended in his system to men of every rank, must have helped in no small measure to win for the new religion the good-will of rulers, whose inferior origin debarred them from Brahman privileges. Political influence has been set down as one of the important factors in the spread of Buddhism in India.

The first reliable evidence we have of the growth of Buddhism, is that offered by the inscriptions of King Asoka.[2] He was the grandson of Chandragupta (Sandrokottos), who, after the death of Alexander the Great, successfully resisted the encroachments

[1] Cf. de la Saussaye, *Religionsgeschichte*, § 84. J. H. C. Kern, *Der Buddhismus und seine Geschichte in Indien*, II. pp. 288 ff.

[2] The most complete and reliable account of Asoka and his inscriptions is to be found in Senart's monumental work in two volumes, *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi*. Cf. also his interesting article, Un roi de l'Inde au III siècle avant notre ère; Asoka et le bouddhisme. *Rev. des deux Mondes*, 1889, I. pp. 67 ff. A translation of Senart's Inscriptions may be found in the *Indian Antiquary*, vols. IX., X., XVII., and XXI.

of the Greeks, and founded a vast empire in Northern India. Asoka mounted the throne about 273 B.C.[1] and enlarged the empire by new conquests. But softened by the frightful havoc of war, he became converted to Buddhism in about the thirteenth year of his reign, and setting himself against all thought of future conquest, devoted his energies to the promotion of the welfare of his subjects. His dominion embraced all of India as far south as Mysore, and extended north as far as the Kabul valley. His reign lasted thirty years or more.[2]

In the interest of the religion he had adopted, Asoka published a number of interesting edicts, which have fortunately been preserved to our day. They were engraved on the faces of huge rocks and on stone pillars, the same edict being published in different parts of the empire. Several duplicate sets of inscriptions have thus far been found. Of these the most important are the fourteen rock-inscriptions existing in a partially defaced condition, at Mansehra on the Afghan frontier, at Kapur di Giri in the upper valley of the Indus, at Girnar in the Gujerat peninsula, at Khalsi near the source of the Jumna, and at Dhauli and Jaugada in Orissa. At the last two places, edicts XI., XII., and XIII. are wanting, but in their stead are two other important ones known as the first and second separate edicts of Dhauli.

[1] Senart, Op. cit. II. p. 257.

[2] The eighth Delhi edict is dated from the 28th year of his consecration as king.

Besides these, there is the edict of Bhabra, engraved on a small granite rock now preserved in Calcutta; the rock-edict common to Rupnath, Sahasaram, Bairat, and Mysore; and eight column-edicts found at Delhi, Allahabad, Mathiah, Radhiah, and the Nepalese Tarai.

In these inscriptions, the king, styling himself now Piyadasi (the Benevolent), now Devanampiya (Dear to the gods) shows himself to be a convert to Buddhism, devout and zealous. Indeed, in the Bhabra edict, he acts as if he were the authoritative head of the Buddhist order, for he enjoins on the clergy of Magadha the frequent rehearsing to both monks and laymen of certain sacred compositions, which he enumerates. He tells of his zeal in sending out missionaries to make known to men the law of kindness to all living creatures, and boasts of its observance in the realms of Antiochus, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas, and Alexander. While interdicting bloody sacrifices, he displays a tolerant and kindly spirit towards Brahman and other heretical sects. He recommends to every sect the spirit of forbearance and generous emulation in the teaching and practice of virtue. It is in virtuous conduct that he finds religion chiefly to consist, inculcating docile obedience to parents, masters, and all other superiors, respect for the aged, almsgiving to Brahmans and monks, compassion for the destitute, kind treatment of servants and slaves, a merciful regard for animal life,

gentleness, purity, and truthfulness. He sets a good example himself by dealing with his subjects as a tender-hearted father to his children. He bestows alms generously on Brahmans and monks of every sect. He appoints inspectors to promote the welfare of the people by suppressing all forms of injustice, especially arbitrary imprisonment and torture. He ordains for criminals condemned to death a respite of three days, that they may have the opportunity of preparing for a better future by almsgiving and fasting. He provides for the importation and cultivation of plants and trees useful for man and beast, especially medicinal herbs, and sees that the highways are properly furnished with watering places. While abolishing the use of animal food at his own table, he puts restrictions on the slaughter of animals for the market, and absolutely prohibits the religious sacrifice of bird or beast. Not unsuitably has he been called the Constantine of Buddhism.

The silence of these monuments throws grave doubt on much that is told of Asoka in the traditions embodied in the *Mahavansa*, a Ceylonese chronicle of the fifth century. Here we read that Asoka, converted by a miracle to Buddhism, built 84,000 stupas throughout his realm; also that, under the direction of the monk Tissa, a great council was held at Patna, in which the canonical books were definitely recognized. This council, as we shall see in the following chapter, is most likely a mere fable.

In like manner, the story that Asoka's son Mahinda became a monk, and having gone as a missionary to distant Ceylon, converted to Buddhism both king and people; and that Sanghamitta, Asoka's daughter, who had likewise renounced the world, introduced into the newly converted country the Buddhist order of nuns, is not without grave suspicion of being a pious invention of the Ceylonese clergy, prompted by feelings of local pride.

This much is doubtless true, that Buddhist missionaries, inspired by Asoka, carried the knowledge of their religion into Ceylon. For it is largely due to the impetus given to the growth of Buddhism by the king, that the name of Buddha was made known to the surrounding nations. At any rate we find Buddhism flourishing in Ceylon about 150 B.C. under the Buddhist king Duttha Gamini. He built for the order a large monastery and two magnificent stupas. Buddhism has ever since been the prevailing religion in Ceylon.

The *Mahavansa* tells of other missionary enterprises successfully carried out under the auspices of Asoka. Besides the conversion of the extreme northern and western peoples of India, missionaries were sent to evangelize Kashmir, Gandhara (Kandahar), and the so-called Yavaṇa country, identified by most scholars with the Greek settlements in the Kabul valley and vicinity, later known as Bactria.[1]

[1] Turnour — *Mahawanso*, p. 71.

In these parts, Buddhism quickly took root and flourished, especially under the Yavana or Greek King Menander, who held sway about 150 B.C. over a large empire comprising Bactria, Kabul, and the northwest portion of India. Being himself a convert to Buddhism, he did much to promote the welfare of the order. He figures prominently in Buddhist tradition as the royal patron of orthodoxy.[1]

More important still for the history of Buddhism in the northern countries, is the reign of Kanishka, or, as he is called on his coins, Kanerkes. A successor of the Scythian conquerors who had overthrown the Greek kingdoms of Parthia and Bactria, Kanishka extended his empire by a series of conquests till it embraced all of Northern India, as well as Kashmir, Kabul, the Bactrian country to the north. The time of his reign was formerly a matter of conjecture, most scholars contenting themselves with the estimate of Lassen, that it embraced a period of thirty years or more, beginning about 10 A.D. But the correctness of this view was called in question when the accumulating evidence of Indian archæology pointed to the reign at that very time in Northern India of a Parthian King Gondophares. In 1880, James Fergusson published an essay in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* on the "Saka, Samvat, and Gupta Eras," in which he advocated the view that Kanishka established the Saka empire in India in 78 A.D. This view has

[1] Cf. *Questions of King Milinda, S. B. E.* XXXV. and XXXVI.

been fully confirmed by numismatic evidence, and is now accepted by the majority of scholars.[1]

Kanishka was an ardent Buddhist and did much for the prosperity of the religion he professed. It was under his auspices that a great council of monks was convened in Kashmir about 100 A.D.,[2] at which three commentaries were drawn upon the threefold canon, the *Tri-pithaka*. The tradition that this council definitely fixed the canon of Sanskrit Scriptures recognized in the Northern school of Buddhism, is, however, untenable; for a number of books belonging to the Northern canon are undoubtedly later than this date.

That this council should be unknown to the Southern Buddhist school is not remarkable. It was held primarily at least for the benefit of Buddhism within Kanishka's empire; and in view of his recent conquests, it is hardly to be supposed that Buddhists elsewhere were invited to take part in it. It is not unlikely that this very conquest of Northern India by Kanishka was the occasion of that separation of the Buddhists of his empire from the members of the order throughout the rest of India, whereby the former, being soon won over to the Mahayana inno-

[1] Cf. Percy Gardner, *The Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum*, p. li. — Silbernagel, *Der Buddhismus*, p. 50. — Barth, *Rev. Hist. Rel.* XXXVIII. p. 247. — Kern, *Der Buddhismus und seine Geschichte in Indien*, II. pp. 448 ff.

[2] Kern, Op. cit. II., 449. — de la Saussaye, *Religionsgeschichte*, II. p. 106.

vations, grew up into the so-called Northern school, with a literature and with traditions partly common to those of the South, and partly peculiar to themselves.[1]

Meanwhile missionary zeal was carrying the knowledge of Buddha into the distant land of China.[2] In the year 61 A. D., the emperor Ming-ti sent a delegation to India to procure Buddhist books and Buddhist teachers. After six years the embassy returned with books, pictures, and relics, in company with two Buddhist monks. The new religion was officially recognized, and given a place of honor by the side of Confucianism and Taoism. In the following century, conversions began to multiply, and more monks came from the far west to China to carry on the work of zeal. Prominent among these was the Parthian monk An-tsing (An-shikao), who arrived at the Chinese capital about 150 A.D., bringing with him sacred books which he translated into Chinese.[3]

The religious communications between China and India became very close during the next few centuries. Not only did Buddhist missionaries from India labor ir China, but many Chinese monks showed their zeal for the newly adopted religion, by making pilgrimages to India to visit the holy places, and to bring back to their country sacred books, relics, statues, and pictures.

[1] *Vide infra*, p. 213.
[2] Silbernagel, Op. cit. pp. 119 ff. — de la Saussaye, Op. cit. § 86.
[3] Cf. *Journ. Roy. As. Soc.* 1856, p. 327.

A few of them wrote valuable accounts, still extant, of what they saw and heard in their travels. Of these pilgrims the most noted are Fa Hien, who journeyed in India and Ceylon in the years 399–414 A. D., and Hiouen Thsang, who travelled extensively in India two centuries later (629–645 A. D.).[1]

The form of Buddhism first introduced into China was the early traditional type, now represented exclusively by Southern Buddhism, but still prevalent in the first century of the Christian era in the Northern empire of Kanishka. But the absorption of the latter by the Mahayana movement, gave occasion for a corresponding change in the Buddhism of China. The later missionaries, being in great majority from Northern India, brought with them the new doctrine, and in a short time, the Hinayana was abandoned in China in favor of Northern Buddhism.

Two of the Bodhisattvas held in high honor in the latter school especially commended themselves to the Chinese, and became the favorite objects of worship. One was Amitabha, the lord of the Sukhavati paradise. The other was Avalokitesvara, the

[1] Cf. James Legge, *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms, Being an Account of the Chinese Monk Fa Hien, of his Travels in India and Ceylon.* Oxford, 1886. — S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World.* 2 vols. Lond. 1884. This work contains the narratives of Fa Hien and Hiouen Thsang, and also describes the journeys of two other pilgrims, Sung Yun and I-Tsing. J. Takakusu, a Japanese pupil of Max Müller, has published I-Tsing's narrative under the title, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago, by I-Tsing.* Oxford, 1896.

Bodhisattva so extravagantly praised, in the *Lotus of the True Law*,[1] as ready to extricate from every sort of danger and misfortune those who think of him or cherish his name. The former is known to the Chinese as Amita or Mito. Offerings of flowers and incense made before his statues, and the frequent repetition of his name, are believed to insure a rebirth in his distant western paradise, where delights of mind and sense are to be enjoyed unceasingly.

Fousa Kwanyin is the name under which the Chinese worship Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, now as a male deity, now as the goddess of mercy, who comes to the relief of men in every strait.

An excessive devotion to statues and relics, the employment of magic arts to keep off evil spirits, and the observance of many of the gross superstitions of Taoism, complete the picture of Buddhism in China, so utterly unlike the system which Buddha taught to men.

From China, Buddhism was introduced into Corea in the fourth century. Two centuries later, missionaries from Corea made it known in Japan. In both these countries local superstitions were incorporated into the new religion, but in its main features it preserved its identity with the Buddhism of China. Annam was also evangelized by Chinese Buddhists at an early day.

[1] Ch. xxiv.

The introduction of Buddhism into Tibet[1] dates from the seventh century. Influenced by his two Buddhist wives, one a Nepalese, the other a Chinese, princess, the king of Tibet, Srong-tsan Sgam-po, whose life covers the first half of the seventh century, invited Buddhist monks from Northern India to preach their religion in his kingdom. It was not till the ninth century, however, that Buddhism in Tibet began to thrive.[2] Monks from India devoted themselves to the translation of the sacred books, and monasteries arose to meet the needs of the increasing native clergy. Persecutions broke out, and several times the religion was in danger of extermination. But it perseveringly struggled against opposition, and in the thirteenth century was the prevailing religion of the land.

In the middle of the thirteenth century, the Mongols conquered Tibet. The royal family was dispersed, and in 1260 the head lama, a monk of the great Sakja monastery, was raised by Kublai Khan, who also professed Buddhism, to the position of spiritual and temporal ruler. To this action of Kublai Khan, and to the reforms in discipline and liturgy, made by the famous Tsong Khaba, in the beginning

[1] Silbernagel, Op. cit. pp. 154 ff. — de la Saussaye, Op. cit. § 85.

[2] Rockhill (*Life of the Buddha*, p. 221) gives evidence that in the middle of the eighth century Tibet was hardly recognized as a Buddhist country. Most of the Tibetan translations of Buddhist works date from the ninth and following centuries. *Ibid.* p. 214. — Cf. Burnouf, *Introduction à l'Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, pp. 577–578. — Weber, *History of Indian Literature*, p. 294.

of the fifteenth century, Lamaism, as Tibetan Buddhism is called, owes many of its peculiarities.

Lamaism is based on the Northern Buddhism of the Middle Ages, which was a degraded form of the Mahayana teaching, saturated with the gross and disgusting elements of Tantra and Siva worship. Its deities are innumerable, its idolatry without limit. In the use of magic formulæ, and in the endless repetition of sacred names, it rivals the Buddhism of China. Its favorite formula is, *Om mani padme hum*, "O jewel in the lotus, amen," which written on streamers exposed to the wind, and multiplied on paper slips turned by hand, or wind, or water, in the so-called prayer-wheels, is thought to secure for the agent unspeakable merit.

The highest deities of Lamaism are five Dhyani-Buddhas, or Buddhas of contemplation. They are the eternal, heavenly types of which the five human Buddhas of the present world-age are only incarnations. Each Dhyani-Buddha has, besides, his corresponding Bodhisattva. Of these the most important is the Dhyani-Buddha Amitabha, whose Bodhisattva is Avalokitesvara, and who became incarnate in Gotama Buddha.

The Dalai-Lama, residing in the great monastery at Lhassa, passes for the incarnation of Buddha Amitabha. When he dies, Amitabha is believed to assume flesh in a new conception. Accordingly, nine months later, a newly born babe is selected by divin-

ation as the reincarnate Buddha. He is carefully nurtured and surrounded with religious honors, and when of mature years assumes authority as the Dalai-Lama.

Between such a religion and Catholicism there is a world-wide difference. Yet in its elaborate ceremonial and hierarchical constitution, it presents a number of resemblances to points of Catholic liturgy and discipline. "The cross," writes the Abbé Huc, "the mitre, the dalmatic, the cope which the Grand Lamas wear on their journeys or when they are performing some ceremony out of the temple, the service with double choirs, the psalmody, the exorcisms, the censer suspended from five chains and which you can open or close at pleasure, the benedictions given by the Lamas by extending the right hand over the heads of the faithful, the rosary, ecclesiastical celibacy, spiritual retirement, veneration of the saints, the fasts, processions, litanies, the holy water, — all these are analogies between the Buddhist and ourselves." [1] He might have added to this list the infallible head of the church, and grades of the clergy corresponding to bishop and priest. The wide propagation of Nestorianism over Central and Eastern Asia in the Middle Ages offers a natural explanation for such of these resemblances as are accretions on early Buddhism.[2]

In the twelfth and following centuries Buddhism

[1] Abbé Huc, *Travels in Tartary, Tibet, and China*, Vol. II. ch. ii.
[2] *Vide infra*, pp. 299 ff.

spread over Tartary, through the missionary zeal of Tibetan Lamas.

While Northern Buddhism was thus exerting a widespread influence over China, Japan, Tartary, and Tibet, the earlier form of Buddhism was extending its peaceful conquests over the countries and islands of Southern Asia. Missionaries from Ceylon evangelized Burma in the fifth century. Within the next two centuries, it spread to Siam, Cambodia, Java, and adjacent islands.[1]

When Fa Hien visited India, in the beginning of the fifth century, he found Buddhism in a flourishing condition. Everywhere he saw splendid stupas and monasteries, and temples adorned with precious statues. Two centuries later Hiouen Thsang found some of the monuments described by his predecessor in ruins, but as yet there were no signs of general decay. In later centuries a reaction against Buddhism set in, and Hinduism rapidly gained ground on its rival. Whether its decline was hastened by persecutions is still a subject of dispute, but with the Arab conquest of India, Buddhism came to an end in the land that gave it birth. Only in the small district of Nepal, in the extreme north, and in Ceylon, in the extreme south, has it succeeded in maintaining its existence.

The number of Buddhists throughout the world is commonly estimated to be about four hundred and

[1] Silbernagel, Op. cit. p. 66.

fifty millions, or one-third of the human race. But in this estimate the error is made of classing all the Chinese and Japanese as Buddhists. The majority of the Chinese are Confucianists and Taoists. A large part of the people of Japan adhere to the traditions of Shintoism. Professor Legge declares that the Buddhists in the whole world are not more than one hundred millions, being far outnumbered, not only by Christians, but also by the adherents of Confucianism and Hinduism. To this estimate Professor Monier Williams [1] gives his approval. Whatever their exact number may be, this much is certain, that the vast majority adhere to forms of religion which Buddha himself would be the first to repudiate. It is the Southern Buddhists of Ceylon, Burma, and Siam who alone deserve to be identified with the order founded by Buddha. They number at the most but thirty millions of souls.

[1] *Buddhism*, p. 15.

CHAPTER V

THE BUDDHIST SACRED BOOKS

The twofold Buddhist canon, the Northern (Sanskrit) and the Southern (Pali) — The character of the Southern canon — The *Vinaya-pitaka*, *Sutta-pitaka*, and *Abhidhamma-pitaka*, constituting the *Ti-pitaka* — Extra-canonical works: the *Dipavansa*, *Mahavansa*, *Commentaries of Buddhaghosa*, *Milinda Panha* — Works peculiar to the Northern canon: the *Buddha Charita*, *Lalita Vistara*, *Abhinishkramana Sutra*, *Saddharma-pundarika* — Translations — Age of the *Ti-pitaka* greatly exaggerated — The view that it was fixed for good in the time of Asoka unwarranted — The LEGENDARY BIOGRAPHIES OF BUDDHA — Critical examination of the age of the *Buddha Charita* — Critical examination of the age of the *Lalita Vistara* — Date of the chief Chinese biography — Other Chinese versions — Tibetan versions — Dates of the chief biographies of the Southern school: the *Nidana Katha* and the Commentary on the *Buddhavansa* — More recent forms of the Buddha-legend.

BOTH the Northern and the Southern school possess a canon of sacred books. The Northern canon, preserved by the Buddhists of Nepal is in Sanskrit; the Southern, belonging to the Buddhists of Ceylon, is in Pali, a softer language bearing the same relation to Sanskrit that Italian does to Latin. The two canons are not identical in contents, being made up only in part of the same books. The

Southern canon is the more ancient and the more respectable; for while not without serious defects, it is free from the disgusting Tantra literature and the Mahayana absurdities that disfigure the Northern canon.

The canonical books of the Southern school, twenty-nine in number, are for the most part compilations of numerous short themes and tracts by unknown authors, the fruit of many ages of Buddhist moralizing and speculation. Stripped of their endless repetitions, they would be about equal in amount to the Sacred Scriptures, though, on the whole, far inferior to them in depth of thought and richness of expression. They abound in commonplaces, and are marred by many puerilities and ridiculous superstitions. Despite the praise lavished on them by enthusiastic scholars like Rhys Davids,[1] they deserve the name of being to a large extent dull reading.

They are grouped under three heads, or, as the Buddhists would say, in three baskets (pitakas): The *Vinaya-pitaka*, a collection of books dealing with the disciplinary rules of the order;[2] the *Sutta-pitaka*, consisting of the alleged discourses of Buddha and his early disciples, as well as of didactic and historical tracts;[3] and the *Abhidhamma-pitaka*, comprising

[1] Cf. his *American Lectures on Buddhism*, Lect. II.

[2] Most of the *Vinaya-pitaka* may be found translated in *S. B. E.* XIII., XVII., and XX.

[3] A few of these have been published in English dress in *S. B. E.* X. and XI.

more detailed treaties on subjects chiefly doctrinal.[1] These three baskets constitute the Buddhist Bible of the Southern school known as the triple basket, *Ti-pitaka* (Sanskrit, *Tri-pithaka*).

Besides these canonical books, there are a few, dating mostly from the fourth and following centuries, that are held in great esteem. These are the Ceylonese chronicles known as the *Dipavansa* and the *Mahavansa*, in which a history of Buddhism is essayed from the death of the founder down to about 300 A. D.; the commentaries on the canonical books, in part composed, in part compiled, by Buddhaghosa, the famous master of Buddhist wisdom belonging to the fifth century; and the *Milinda Panha*, made known to English readers by Rhys Davids under the title, *The Questions of King Milinda*.[2]

Northern Buddhism also has its *Tri-pithaka*, to which belong the legendary lives of Buddha known as the *Buddha Charita*,[3] the *Lalita Vistara*,[4] and the *Abhinishkramana Sutra*; also the favorite work of the Mahayana school, known as the *Saddharma-pundarika*, or *Lotus of the True Law*.[5]

Only part of the Northern canon is included in

[1] The *Abhidhamma* books have not yet been made accessible to English readers.

[2] *S. B. E.* XXXV. and XXXVI. Its date is placed "at or a little after the beginning of the Christian era." Op. cit. Introd.

[3] Translation by E. B. Cowell in *S. B. E.* XLIX.

[4] French translation by Ph. E. Foucaux, in *Annales du Musée Guimet*, t. VI. with supplement t. XIX.

[5] Translation by H. Kern in *S. B. E.* XXI.

the *Tri-pithaka*. The rest consists of Tantra and Dharani literature, works abounding in obscene and magic superstitions.

In the chief countries abroad where Buddhism took firm root, the sacred books were made known to the people through translations. These have been nearly all preserved, so that to-day the sacred literature of Tibet contains the complete Northern canon, while the Southern is equally well represented in the sacred literature of Siam. The Buddhist literature of China is also of great extent. It is made up of translations from both the Northern and the Southern canon, but the works peculiar to the former predominate.

In Burmese, too, there are a number of translations of works belonging to the Southern canon.

The attempt has been made by various scholars — notably Max Müller, Rhys Davids, and Professor Oldenberg — to determine the age of the different parts of the Southern canon, but the data on which they rely are not such as to inspire confidence in their estimates. That the confession-formula, known as the *Patimokkha*, and some other parts of the *Vinaya*, go back to the early years of the order, and that many of the sayings attributed to Buddha in the *Suttas* are in substance, at least, authentic is not improbable. But to determine even approximately the time when the various parts of the canon took permanent form is a matter of the greatest uncer-

tainty, on which scholars are widely divided. Even the question when the canon was finally closed does not admit of a positive answer.

There is no reason to doubt that the threefold collection, known as the *Ti-pitaka*, was already in existence when the sacred traditions were first committed to writing. This took place, according to the Ceylonese chronicles, during the reign of Vattha Gamini (88–76 B. C.).[1] But was this *Ti-pitaka* co-extensive with the canon known to Buddhaghosa six centuries later? There is no positive evidence available to establish this absolute identity. On the contrary, the fact that the life of Buddha, forming the introduction to the canonical *Jataka* was composed in the fifth century, creates the strong suspicion that additions were made to the canon in the next few centuries following its inscription on palm-leaf tablets.

Max Müller and Rhys Davids, relying on the testimony of the Ceylonese chronicles, say that the Pali canon was fixed definitely at the so-called council of Patna held in the reign of Asoka. But the very existence of this council is a matter of grave doubt.[2] In the first place, there is no reference to it in the edicts of Asoka. The Bhabra edict, it is true, was formerly taken to be a memorial letter to this coun-

[1] Turnour, *Mahawanso*, p. 207. Cf. *Dipavansa*, xx. 20, 21.

[2] Cf. Kern, *Der Buddhismus*, II. pp. 351–352. In his *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, p. 110, he sees in the so-called Council of Patna nothing more than a mere party-meeting.

cil; but it is now recognized to be naught else than a proclamation to the Buddhist order enjoining the frequent use of certain tracts held to be the authentic sayings of Buddha.[1]

Secondly, the existence of this alleged council is unknown to Northern Buddhist tradition. This silence is alone almost convincing evidence that the council is a myth. For the Buddhists of the North were evangelized by missionaries from Magadha in the reign of Asoka; nay, according to the Ceylonese tradition, their evangelization was one of the fruits of that very council. A council of such importance could not have been ignored by Northern tradition, had it really existed.

[1] Cf. p. xxvi of Professor Oldenberg's Introd. to vol. XIII. of *S. B. E.* E. Senart, *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, II. pp. 304–305. This list is interesting, for while it is perfectly compatible with the existence at that time of a much more extensive canon, it bears witness to the fact that in Asoka's day but few suttas were credited with an origin derived from Buddha himself. The edict is thus rendered by Senart.

"King Piyadasi greets the clergy of Magadha and wishes them prosperity and health. You know, sirs, with what respect and goodwill I regard Buddha, the Law, and the Clergy. All that has been said by the Blessed Buddha has been well said, and as far, sirs, as my own will goes, I desire that this religious law may long abide. Here, sirs, for example, are religious works: the Teaching of the Discipline, the Supernatural (?) Powers of the Aryas, the Perils of the Future, the Verses on the Hermit, the Questions of Upatishya, the Sutra on Perfection, and the Homily on Lying, pronounced by the Blessed Buddha before Rahula. These religious works I would have the frequent object of rehearsal and meditation for communities of monks and nuns, and for the devout laity of both sexes as well. It is for this reason, sirs, that I make this inscription, that you may know my will." — *Translated from Senart, Op. cit.* II. pp. 207–208.

Again, had the *Ti-pitaka* received its final and permanent form as early as the time of Asoka, it must have been known in its entirety to the Buddhists of the North as well as to those of Ceylon; for both were evangelized at the same time. But the presence in the Southern canon of many works not found in the *Tri-pithaka* of Northern Buddhism and *vice versa*, shows that on both sides the number of sacred works commonly recognized in the third century B. C. was greatly augmented by later accretions. In the face of such evidence, it is idle to assume as an established truth the final formation of the Pali canon in the time of Asoka, especially when the sole ground for the assumption is a Ceylonese tradition six hundred years later than the alleged event.[1]

Still more hazardous is it to assert on the basis of equally uncertain traditions that the great bulk of the *Vinaya* and *Sutta* texts were passed upon by the so-called council of Vaisali, a century after Buddha's death.[2] The existence of this council rests on too slender a foundation to serve as a reliable datum for fixing the age of the oldest parts of the canon. It is

[1] The value of Indian traditions may be judged from the following statement of the judicious scholar James Fergusson: "Any one who has travelled in India, knows what sort of information he gets even from the best and most intelligent Brahmans with regard to the dates of the temples they and their forefathers have administered in ever since their erection. One or two thousand years is a moderate age for temples which we know were certainly erected within the last two or three centuries." — *Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 493.

[2] Cf. Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, p. 109.

probably nearer the truth to say that part of the *Vinaya* and not a few of the *Suttas* are posterior to the time of Asoka. So profound and discriminating a scholar as A. Barth has said: "With the exception of two or three events, the memory of which has been handed down to us by the Greeks, the chronological history of India begins with the inscriptions. The most ancient of these, the famous edicts of King Piyadasi-Asoka . . . are also the earliest documents undoubtedly authentic that we have of Buddhism. It is very probable that among the elements that go to make up the *Tri-pithaka* there are some that belong to a past more remote still; for it is certain that the Buddhism of the inscriptions — a sort of religion of state in the vast and mighty realm of India — was already in possession of a literature. But there are many reasons for doubting that the Buddhists of that time had come to recognize a canon. At any rate, there is not a single portion of this canon in its present form, Pali as well as Sanskrit, that can be assigned with certitude to so distant a period."[1] Similar views are held by E. Senart[2] and others.

From these considerations it is plain that the larger estimates of the translators of vol. X., XI., and XIII. of the *Sacred Books of the East* are to be received with prudent reserve. This caution is espe-

[1] *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, XXVIII. p. 241.
[2] Op. cit. II. pp. 304–305.

cially needed in reading the *American Lectures on Buddhism*, where the illustrious author allows himself to be carried so far by enthusiasm as to attribute, with a confidence akin to certainty, extremely remote dates to Buddhist suttas, whose existence in Asoka's time is at best but conjectural.[1]

It is important to note that of the ancient canon belonging unquestionably to the prechristian era, only two books, *The Book of the Great Decease* and the *Mahavagga*, contain information in regard to the life of Buddha. The former, which Rhys Davids[2] thinks to be as old as 300 B. C., is not a biography, but simply an account of Buddha's last days, — his sickness, death, obsequies, and the division of his relics. The *Mahavagga*, a very old and important portion of the *Vinaya*, giving a history of the foundation and development of the order of monks, recounts a number of incidents, merely, in the life of the founder, beginning with his four weeks of contemplation which followed his enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree.[3]

For our chief knowledge of the legendary lore that encircles the person of Buddha, we are thrown upon

[1] Rhys Davids — *Buddhism*, N. Y. 1896, Lecture ii. and vi. Cf. also pages 95–96, where, on the basis of a sutta of unknown date, he tries in all seriousness to solve the problem how long it takes a people to supernaturalize their hero, and decides that it takes less than a hundred years!

[2] *S. B. E.* XI. p. xi.

[3] It is translated in *S. B. E.* vol. XIII. and XVII.

Buddhist books, whose integrity has, to a large extent, to be taken on faith,[1] and not one of which can be proved to be as old as the synoptic Gospels. The abundant mass of carefully sifted evidence, by which the authenticity of the latter is vindicated, is in striking contrast with the slender and uncertain basis that gives support to the generally accepted dates of the Buddhist books in question.[2]

The one which has the best claim to priority in age is the Sanskrit poem known as the *Buddha Charita*. As has been remarked already, it belongs to the Northern canon. In its original form, it consisted of thirteen chapters, and gave the legendary tale of Buddha's life as far as his attainment of perfect wisdom under the Bodhi-tree. Most scholars agree in ascribing its authorship to the monk Asvaghosa, the contemporary of Kanishka. Still, the evidence on which this estimate is made is scarcely such as would stand the severe tests of biblical critics. The earliest positive testimony seems to be that of

[1] The oldest Buddhist MSS. extant are of mediæval origin.

[2] Card. Newman, in an interesting letter to W. S. Lilly on the subject of Buddhism and Christianity, very pertinently says: "To prove the authenticity and date of one of our Gospels, we are plunged into a maze of manuscripts of various dates and families, of various and patristic testimonies and quotations, and to satisfy the severity of our critics, there must be an absolute coincidence of text and concordance of statement in these various manuscripts put forward as evidence. If a particular passage is not found in all discovered manuscripts, it is condemned. . . . Why are we not to ask for evidence parallel to this before we receive the history of Buddha?" — W. S. Lilly, *The Claims of Christianity*. London, 1894. Ch. ii.

I-Tsing, a Chinese pilgrim who came to India in 673. But if we carry this testimony further back, as does Professor Beal, to Dhammaraksha, who translated the work into Chinese about 400 A. D., it is still too far removed from the time of Asvaghosa to exclude misgivings.[1] Allowing him, however, on the basis of this meagre evidence, to have been the contemporary of Kanishka, who held sway in Northern India from 78 to about 106 A. D., we can hardly be justified in placing the composition of his poem earlier than 70 A. D. It may well be as late as 100 A. D.

More widely known than the *Buddha Charita* is the *Lalita Vistara* (Book of Exploits), a work likewise of the Northern Buddhist school. It describes the life of Buddha down to the time when he preached his first sermon at Benares. It is a Sanskrit work in prose, interspersed with many passages in verse, which seem to have been taken from some poetic life of Buddha and to have been inserted into the prose narrative so as to form a harmony. The date of this work, the favorite source from which the parallels to the incidents in the early life of our Saviour are drawn, is a matter of the greatest uncertainty. From the Chinese translation, the *Phu-yau-king*, made about 300 A. D., we know that it goes back at least to the third century of our era.[2]

[1] Cf. Introduction to the *Buddha Charita*, *S. B. E.* XLIX. and the *Fo-sho-hing-tsan-king*, *S. B. E.* XIX. p. xxx.

[2] Cf. *S. B. E.* XIX. p. xxv.

In the introduction to his version of the Chinese *Buddha Charita*, Professor Beal, following the Chinese scholar Stanislas Julien, has sought to identify the *Lalita Vistara* with the original of the so-called *Fo-pen-hing-king*, a Chinese life of Buddha, said to have been translated from an Indian source by Chu-fa-lan (Gobharana) about 70 A. D. But this is mere conjecture.[1] For first of all, the Chinese version is no longer extant, and hence offers no basis for comparison. It is true, Professor Beal thinks that a number of passages from a certain *Pen-hing-king*, which he found quoted in a commentary on Wong Puh's *Life of Buddha*, a work of the seventh century, are from this *Pen-hing-king;* for they are not identical with the corresponding passages in any known *Pen-hing-king*, or life of Buddha, of which early Chinese literature offers several examples.[2] But the strength of this inference is lessened by the consideration that these quotations may have been taken from some *Pen-hing-king* of which no record has come down to us.

But furthermore, even if these quotations did belong to the early Chinese version, their general similarity with corresponding passages in the *Lalita*

[1] The questionable assertion of Max Müller that the *Lalita Vistara* "was translated into Chinese 76 A. D." (*History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 517) has been unsuspectingly adopted by Isaac Taylor, *The Alphabet, an Account of the Origin and Development of Letters*, London, 1883, vol. II. p. 300.

[2] Cf. *S. B. E.* XIX. pp. xvi-xvii.

Vistara would not necessarily imply that the latter was the source from which they came. It is just as likely that they were derived from the same traditional source, perhaps oral, perhaps written, which served as a basis for the *Lalita Vistara*, the *Buddha Charita*, and the other forms of the legend that have come down to us. This consideration seems not to have escaped the mind of Professor Beal himself, for only a few pages further, he admits the possibility of the *Fo-pen-hing* having been connected with the *Buddha Charita* of Asvaghosa, or with "the original then circulating in India on which Asvaghosa founded his poem."[1] In his *Buddhism in China*, he is even more explicit.

"We do not know whether the life of Buddha taken to China A. D. 72 was in any way derived from this work of Asvaghosa, or whether he derived his material from this work; but it is likely that the envoys sent by Ming-ti would hear of the writings of the Patriarch of the Northern Buddhists, and it is possible that the book they took back with them was connected (either as the original form of it or as a digest) with the *Buddha Charita Kavya* (*i. e.* the Epic of Buddha)."[2]

It is plain that the possibility of the *Fo-pen-hing* being derived from the *Buddha Charita*, or some other source, as well as from the *Lalita Vistara*, is very slender proof for the existence of the latter as early as 70 A. D.

[1] Op. cit. p. xxxi.

[2] Op. cit. p. 73. Cf. also p. 90.

The rest of the evidence on which the alleged antiquity of the *Lalita Vistara* is based, is equally lacking in cogency. Professor Foucaux, who has translated the work into French, thinks it to be as old as the Council of Kashmir held under King Kanishka; for it is to this council that Tibetan tradition assigns the fixing of the Northern Buddhist canon, to which the *Lalita Vistara* belongs.[1]

If his argument were convincing, it would not establish for the work in question a greater antiquity than 80–105 A. D., for it was some time within this period that the council was convened.[2] But even this estimate cannot be maintained; for, as Rhys Davids has pointed out, the Buddhist tradition on which it rests has nothing to commend it.[3] The first to give an account of the Council of Kashmir is the Chinese pilgrim, Hiouen Thsang, who belongs to the seventh century. Of a settlement of the canon, or of the *Lalita Vistara*, he has not a word to say, but merely relates that the monks contented themselves with drawing up their commentaries to serve as an explanation of the *Tri-pithaka*. A Tibetan tradition, which cannot be traced within six centuries of the event, is too uncertain a basis to build on.

There is extant a Chinese translation of the *Lalita*

[1] This dubious view is adopted by Max Müller. Op. cit. p. 517.

[2] *Vide supra*, p. 163.

[3] Cf. *Hibbert Lectures on Buddhism*, pp. 197–204; also *Buddhism*, p. 239.

Vistara, dating from about 300 A. D. This is the earliest positive evidence that we have of the existence of the Sanskrit original. It follows that the latter must be somewhat earlier still. But the presence in it of a striking incident that is not to be found in any other version of the Buddha-legend of an earlier date than 230 A. D., points to the third century as the time when the work was composed, or at least when it received its present form.[1]

Besides the *Buddha Charita* and the *Lalita Vistara*, there is another Sanskrit work which treats of the early days of Buddha, the so-called *Mahabhinishkramana Sutra*, or *Book of the Great Renunciation*. Its date is unknown, but, like the *Lalita Vistara*, it does not belong to the Southern canon. In its original form it seems to have comprised only the account of Buddha's flight from his palace of pleasure, and his adoption of the ascetic life. Later, the other incidents of Buddha's life were added, so as to make a complete narrative from his incarnation to the conversion of his father, shortly after his enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree. In general character and style it resembles very much the *Lalita Vistara*. It was translated into Chinese in 588 A. D. Of this version, the so-called *Fo-pen-hing-tsih-king*, Professor Beal has made an abridged English translation under the title, *The Romantic Legend of Sakya Buddha*.

[1] Cf. *S. B. E.* XIX. pp. xxvi. ff. For the striking incident to which allusion is made, *vide infra*, p. 218.

Besides the biography just mentioned, the Chinese Buddhist canon offers several versions dating from the first three centuries of our era. Professor Beal has enumerated these, and indicated the contents of the principal ones in the introduction to his translation of the *Fo-pen-hing-tsan-king*, the Chinese version of the *Buddha Charita*.[1] These versions, in conjunction with the *Buddha Charita*, are of great value as witnesses to the character and contents of the early Buddha-legend.

There are also Tibetan versions of the *Lalita Vistara* and of the *Buddha Charita*, but they date, at the very earliest, only from the seventh century. The *Life of Buddha*, compiled by W. W. Rockhill from Tibetan traditions, represents the legend as developed by the accretions of more modern speculations.

The earliest extant form of the legend which we have from the Southern school is the so-called *Nidana Katha*. It constitutes the introduction to the *Jataka*, a book of tales concerning Buddha's former lives, and was composed in Ceylon about the middle of the fifth century. Its numerous references to other biographies, now lost, show that it was not the first written version known to the Southern school. It gives the narrative from his incarnation to the visit he made his father soon after the attainment of Buddhaship. An excellent translation has been made by Rhys Davids, in his *Buddhist Birth Stories*,

[1] *S. B. E.* vol. XIX.

or Jataka Tales. The chief portions of the narrative may also be found admirably translated in the very useful work of H. C. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations.*

Practically identical with the *Nidana Katha* is the biography found in the *Commentary on the Buddhavansa*, a work of the fifth century. It has been translated by George Turnour, in the seventh volume of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.*[1]

The Burmese life of Buddha, of which we possess an excellent English version by Bishop Bigandet, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama, the Buddha of the Burmese*, is largely a translation of the *Nidana Katha.* As it is of recent origin, dating only from the eighteenth century, its variations from the more ancient form must be set down as the product of later speculation.

The same is true of the biography compiled by Rev. R. S. Hardy from Ceylonese sources, both new and old, which he has published in his *Manual of Budhism.*

The Siamese are acquainted with a life of Buddha very like the Burmese life of which mention has just been made. It has been made known to English readers in the work of H. Alabaster, *The Wheel of the Law.*

[1] pp. 789 ff.

PART III

The Alleged Relations of Buddhism With Christianity Examined

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CHAPTER

SURVEY OF THE CHIEF WORKS WRITTEN TO SHOW THE PRESENCE OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT IN THE GOSPELS

The theory that primitive Christianity was influenced by Buddhism not held by the majority of scholars — The three chief advocates of the theory — (1) Ernst von Bunsen — Outline of his argument — Critical view of his defects — (2) Prof. Rudolf Seydel — Outline of his argument — Critical view of his defects — (3) Arthur Lillie — The untrustworthy character of his works — Outline of his argument — Critical view of his defects — Jesus not an Essene — Neither Essenes nor Therapeuts Buddhists — Futility of the attempt to make John and Paul out to be Gnostics.

HAS Christianity derived any of its features from the religion of Buddha? This is a question that naturally presents itself to the student of Buddhism. From the majority of those most competent to pronounce on the question, it has received a negative answer. Among these are the eminent Indianists, H. Oldenberg, A. Barth, E. Hardy, Rhys Davids, Monier Williams, J. E. Carpenter, E. W. Hopkins, Alexander Cunningham, James Burgess, R. Spence Hardy, as well as distinguished scholars like H.

Kuenen, Goblet d'Alviella, and Bishop Lightfoot. Some, as Christian Lassen, James Prinsep, A. Weber, F. Köppen, and James Fergusson, have thought it probable that certain secondary features of Christianity, such as monasticism, the veneration of saints and relics, the use of bells, church steeples, rosaries, are of Buddhist origin. Of these scholars, the first two have prudently abstained from positive pronouncements, having contented themselves with throwing out a few conjectures.

But what with these was at best but conjecture, has been invested by a few recent writers with the dignity of an established truth. Nor have they been content with the limited influence on Western thought which scholars like Lassen and Prinsep have attributed to Buddhism, but have sought to prove that the Gospel narrative of the life and teachings of Christ is but a modified version of the Buddha-legend, embellished with extracts from the Buddhist sutras.

The champions of this theory are chiefly three.[1] The first to write a lengthy treatise on the subject was Ernst von Bunsen,[2] who in 1880 brought before the

[1] The other advocates of this theory have done naught else than repeat the arguments of the three authors under consideration. Hence, there is no call for a special refutation of their several hackneyed productions.

[2] Mr. Bunsen seems to have found the suggestion of his work in an article entitled, *Der Essäismus und Jesus*, which Prof. A. Hilgenfeld published in his *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 1867, 10, pp. 97 ff. and in which he advocated the theory that Jesus adopted Essene teachings and customs remotely of Buddhist origin.

public *The Angel Messiah of Buddhists, Essenes, and Christians.*

A rapid glance through the pages of this tedious volume is enough to convince the discreet reader that it is little more than a tissue of worthless speculations, for which there is not a shred of sound historic proof, nay, which are often out of joint with the facts.

His theory is that the notion of an incarnate Angel-Messiah originated with the Zoroastrian Magi of Babylon. Buddha imported this and other Zoroastrian doctrines into India. The Magi communicated them through Daniel to the Essenes. The opening of communications between the East and the West, after Alexander's conquests, enabled the Essenes to become acquainted with the legendary lore that centred around Buddha. Christ was an Essene, and being regarded like Buddha as an Angel-Messiah, came after his death to have these legends applied to Himself.

In trying to make good this series of propositions, which betray on their face a lack of sound scholarship, the author has employed methods the very opposite of scientific.

Take, for example, the fundamental idea in his treatise, that the Essenes looked to an Angel-Messiah, *i. e.*, to a divine spirit of heaven destined to assume human form, to free mankind from the fetters of sin. That this notion formed part of Essene belief, no his-

torian of repute has made bold to affirm. It has remained for Mr. Bunsen to try to establish its historical reality by a process of reasoning that is sadly lacking in coherence.

"The Essenes," he tells us, "believed in angels and they also may have believed in an Angel-Messiah."[1] He finds that the first direct evidence of this belief dates from about 100 A.D.—a date, it must be owned, somewhat late for his purpose—in the person of a certain Elkesai, said by Epiphanius to have been a Jew who joined the sect of the Essenes and wrote a prophetic book. According to others, he was the founder of the Mendæan sect. Referring to Hippolytus[2] (who, by the way, carefully distinguishes the Elkesaites from the Essenes), Mr. Bunsen informs us that Elkesai is said to have got his book from the Parthians in the city Seræ, which he takes to mean China. After connecting, by one of his feats of philology, Elkesai the Jew with the Casdim, or Assidæans, of Palestine, he makes the suggestion that Elkesai's book was a Chinese-Buddhist work. The reason he gives is both curious and characteristic.

"The connection of Elkesai-Buddha's doctrines with the East is proved beyond dispute by the recorded fact that the Mendæans, before being received into the Christian sect, had solemnly to renounce Zoroaster, whose doctrines were by Buddha more generally introduced into India."

[1] Op. cit. p. 103.

[2] *Refutation of Heresies*, B. IX. ch. ix.

Before admitting the indisputable force of this argument, most readers would naturally look for proofs that Elkesai was a Mendæan, and that Buddha's teaching was borrowed from Zoroaster. But these proofs are not forthcoming. Neither does it seem to have occurred to Mr. Bunsen that if Elkesai was a Mendæan, he could not have been an Essene; for the triumphant conclusion of it all is, "Since Elkesai was a prophet among the Essenes, these seem to have believed in an Angel-Messiah, and this Essenic tradition may have been of Chinese-Buddhistic origin."[1]

No less astonishing is his distortion of facts too plain to be easily mistaken.

The simple statement of Jerome that some ancient writers took Philo to be the author of the book of *Wisdom* is soberly appealed to as proof that this was Jerome's view as well.[2]

Eusebius, he asserts, thought it highly probable that Buddhist traditions had been introduced into the New Testament writings, and in confirmation directs the astonished reader to the passage in his *Church History* (II. 17) where Eusebius, utterly ignoring the Buddhists, aims to show that the Therapeuts were Christians.[3]

The assertion of Clement of Alexandria that Mary, in giving birth to our blessed Saviour, did not lose the physical signs of virginity, is twisted into a denial by

[1] Op. cit. pp. 112–115.
[2] Op. cit. p. 94.
[3] Op. cit. pp. 51, 99.

Clement of the virgin-birth of Christ, and made to do proof that he did not interpret *Isaias*, vii. 14, as prophetic of Christ's miraculous conception.

Moreover, since Clement makes no mention here of the account in *Matthew* of the virgin-motherhood of Mary, the conclusion is drawn that this Gospel passage is an interpolation of later date than the time of Clement.[1] Such blunders would be inexcusable, even if Clement's homily on this very passage of Isaias were not extant, in which he both interprets it of Christ's virgin-birth and also makes explicit reference to *Matthew*, i. 23.

Examples like these, unfortunately too numerous in Mr. Bunsen's work, are supplemented by other serious defects. His imagination overrides his judgment, and riots in a profusion of erroneous suggestions, and worthless assumptions. He never tires of recurring to religious art symbols and zodiacal signs,[2] the constellation Pleiades being the favorite key to many religious problems. He is the philologian run mad, making startling identifications of names the most remote, which identifications are then pressed into service for purposes of argument. Homer and the Homerides are connected with Gomer and the Arabian Gomerides; the Casdim are the Assidæans; John the Baptist (Ashai) means John the Essene;

[1] Op. cit. p. 109.

[2] It is easy to recognize in this part of his work a revival of the obsolete speculations of the French atheists of the eighteenth century. Cf. Volney, *Les ruines*, Ch. xxii, § xiii.

Pharisee is the same as Pharsis, the Arabian (!) name for the Persians; Pythagoras is the Greek form of the compound word Buddha-guru.[1]

But what is more astonishing still is to find the flimsy suggestions and unwarranted conjectures of earlier chapters turning up later as established truths, to become the stepping-stones to further conclusions. These serious defects, together with the grossly exaggerated parallelism which he seeks to make good between the Buddha-legend and the Gospel story of Christ, stamp the work as utterly unscientific and untrustworthy. Professor Kuenen[2] in his *Hibbert Lectures* has scored it with the severity it deserves.

Far superior to Mr. Bunsen in method, reasoning, and style, is Professor Rudolf Seydel, who, drawing inspiration from Mr. Bunsen's work, published two years later his own dissertation on the indebtedness of Christianity to Buddhism.[3] After trying in the

[1] His pronouncement on Pythagoras may bear repeating in an abridged form, as a further illustration of his visionary mind and looseness of thought. Pythagoras, he tells us on the authority of Clement of Alexandria, was generally thought to have been a barbarian. This word seems to have been formed after the Indian "varvara" and would thus have meant originally a "black skinned man with woolly hair." He was thus a Hamite. Now the Hamites of Genesis are cognate with the Homeric "Ethiopians from the East," and these migrated from India to the West. Pythagoras was thus connected by barbarian descent with India. This explains his acquaintance with Indian Bodhi or Wisdom. Op. cit. p. 68.

[2] *Natural Religion and Universal Religions.* London, 1882, p. 235.

[3] *Das Evangelium von Jesu in seinen Verhältnissen zu Buddha-sage und Buddha-lehre.* Leipzig, 1882.

first part of his treatise to establish the prechristian origin of the Buddhist scriptures from which he draws, he devotes the bulk of the volume (pp. 105–293) to an exhaustive comparison of the points of resemblance which he has found in the two religions. These points of resemblance, fifty-one in number, he then proceeds to separate into three classes.

The first class includes those which may be readily explained without the hypothesis of a borrowing on either side.

The second class embraces such as from their detailed agreement are less likely to be of independent origin.

To each of these two classes he assigns twenty-three parallels. The five remaining parallels constitute the third class, being of such a nature that they can be satisfactorily explained only on the ground of Buddhist origin. They are, 1st, the presentation of the infant Jesus in the temple compared with that of the infant Buddha; 2d, the fast of Jesus and that of Buddha; 3d, the pre-existence of Jesus and of Buddha in heaven; 4th, the episode of Nathaniel and the fig-tree in *John*, i. 46 ff., which Professor Seydel connects with the legend of the Bodhi-tree; 5th, the episode of the man born blind (*John*, ix. 1–4) which is declared to have no place in Jewish thought.

If Christianity has borrowed these points from Buddhism, he argues, the presumption is very strong

that the resemblances of the second class are likewise of Buddhist origin.

But how account for this actual borrowing on the part of Christianity? Professor Seydel thinks, though he is unable to prove, that at the time of the formation of the synoptic Gospels, there existed a poetic-apocalyptic Gospel strongly colored by Buddhistic traditions, which the writers of our canonical Gospels made use of. These traditions had ample opportunity to make their way to the West, for there was a constant communication between Greece and India from the time of Alexander's conquest.

If Professor Seydel had succeeded in making good the several points of his argument, the conclusion that Christianity is largely indebted to Buddhism would have been irresistible. But it is just here he has egregiously failed. The capital fault of the work is its excessive subjectiveness. The five cases which he thinks point unmistakably to Buddhist influence on Christianity prove, on examination, to be the weakest sort of evidence. Many of the alleged points of resemblance in the second class of parallels are purely fanciful. Others are exaggerated; while not a few are drawn from Buddhist sources that are later in date than the Gospels. The presence in Palestine of a Buddhistic-apocalyptic Gospel as the actual source of the alleged Christian borrowings, is purely a figment of his imagination. There is not a trace of it in apocryphal writings, not a mention of

it in history. It is, moreover, incompatible with the early date of the Gospels.

These defects have been ably pointed out by Professor Seydel's critics, H. Oldenberg, [1] E. Hardy, [2] and J. E. Carpenter,[3] with the unanimous verdict that his thesis is not proven.

The third writer who has tried to demonstrate the indebtedness of Christianity to Buddhism, is Arthur Lillie. The inferior of Professor Seydel both in mental grasp and in method of exposition, he has surpassed him in prolificness. He is the author of no less than four books dealing with the subject under review: *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, London, 1881; [4] *The Popular Life of Buddha*, London, 1883; *Buddhism in Christendom or Jesus the Essene*, London, 1885; and *The Influence of Buddhism on Primitive Christianity*, London, 1893. But the matter in these volumes, stripped of its repetitions, of its false, inaccurate, and unwarranted statements and inferences, would be reduced to the compass of a very small book, the loss of which would be little felt in the world of scholars.

Scarcely less visionary than his precursor Mr.

[1] *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1882, no. 18, p. 415.

[2] *Der Buddhismus*, ch. 7.

[3] *Mod. Rev.* July, 1882, pp. 620, ff. Professor Seydel published a rejoinder to his critics, *Die Buddha-legende und das Leben Jesu nach den Evangelien*. Leipzig, 1884. It is little more than an abridgment of his former work, and is vitiated by the same defects.

[4] The American edition published in New York, 1882, is the one referred to in this work.

Bunsen, he shows the same fondness for zodiacal signs as a key to religious problems, and dilates with supreme satisfaction on his theory of the Buddhist origin of the symbols of Christian art. He is constantly mistaking for facts the dictates of his fancy, and repeatedly fails to see things as they are.

The well-known passage in which Philo [1] gives instances from different nations of the life-long practice of virtue, mentioning in order the seven wise men of Greece, the Magi of Persia, the Gymnosophists of India, and the Essenes of Palestine, is cited as convincing proof that the Essenes were of the same faith as the Buddhists, and is made the basis for the still more remarkable statement that Philo's testimony shows that the "religions of Babylon, Palestine, Egypt, and Greece were undermined by certain kindred mystical societies organized by Buddha's missionaries under the various names of Therapeuts, Essenes, Neo-Pythagoreans, Neo-Zoroastrians, etc. Thus Buddhism paved the way for Christianity." [2]

He expects the reader to take his word for the soundness of his assertion that "the new Zoroaster, Elijah, Pythagoras, and Laotse all drew their inspiration from Buddha." [3] He tells us in confidence that the writers of the canonical Gospels "thought it no

[1] Ch. ix. of his essay, *Every Virtuous Man is Free.*

[2] *Influence of Buddhism on Prim. Christianity*, pp. 104–105. *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 6.

[3] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 200.

sin to draw on the Alexandrine library of Buddhist books for much of their matter," though he does not see fit to make known the source of this interesting piece of information.[1] He tries to persuade us that the Buddhists of Ceylon are theists in the face of the Ceylonese priests who have declared officially that Buddhism teaches the highest goodness without a God.[2]

Indianists must open their eyes wide to be told in his several volumes that "through Buddhism the institution of caste was assailed and overturned;"[3] that "polygamy was for the first time pronounced immoral and slavery condemned;"[4] that "woman from a chattel was made man's equal;"[5] that "conversion preceded by baptism and a confession of sins was an originality of Buddhism;"[6] that the chief Buddhist rite was a bread oblation;[7] that the *Lalita Vistara* represents the oldest form of Buddhism;[8] that the *White Lotus of Dharma* (*Lotus of the True Law*) is one of the oldest Buddhist books;[9] that Japan was evangelized from Ceylon and that its Buddhism is of the Southern school;[10] that, accord-

[1] *Influence*, p. 3.

[2] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, pp. 15–17. Cf. Olcott, *A Buddhist Catechism according to the Canon of the Southern Church*. Boston, 1885, p. 61.

[3] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, Introd.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 188.

[7] *Ibid.* p. 188.

[8] *Ibid.* p. 70.

[9] *Ibid.* p. 70.

[10] *Ibid.* p. 17.

ing to the Buddha-legend, Buddha spent six years under the Bo (Bodhi) tree,[1] and that he converted and baptized Mara, the tempter.[2]

Statements like these are after all not so astonishing from one who dares to run counter to the strong current of modern scholarship, in asserting that original Buddhism was based on belief in a supreme God[3] and in a future life of conscious happiness; and that the so-called atheistic creed was introduced into Northern Buddhism during the reign of King Kanishka. Still, from a man who sets himself up as an enlightener of benighted Christians, one has a right to expect, at least, such accuracy of statement as betokens a discerning and critical mind. But accuracy is not one of Mr. Lillie's virtues.

He gravely informs his readers that Christianity "proclaimed three Gods instead of one;"[4] and the account given by the Abbés Huc and Gabet of the rite in which certain fanatic Lamas were wont to draw a knife across the abdomen and expose the bowels with apparent impunity, a thing which they learned from hearsay and not from personal observation, is distorted into a "report that they saw a Bokté rip open his own stomach in the great court of the Lamaserie of Rache Tchurin in Tartary."[5]

[1] *Ibid.* p. 44. [2] *Ibid.* p. 45.

[3] The pretended theism of Asoka — Mr. Lillie's main proof — rests on incorrect translations of the rock-edicts.

[4] *Influence*, p. 22.

[5] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 47.

The rite of initiation into the order of monks, practised by the Buddhists of Nepal — a rite of three days' duration consisting of a tedious succession of prayers, offerings, and sprinklings, and presenting but the remotest analogy to the baptismal ceremony of the Catholic Church — is, according to Mr. Lillie, so like the Catholic rite of baptism "that Rhys Davids may be excused for holding it of Persian Gnostic origin."[1] Here the presumption is conveyed to the unsuspecting reader that the writer is not talking at random, for he makes reference to Rhys Davids's *Buddhism*, p. 206; but if the reader were to take the pains to verify this reference, he would find, to his astonishment, that what the distinguished author considers a possible derivation from Persian Gnosticism is not this Buddhist rite at all, of which there is not the slightest mention, but the metaphysical notion of the Adi-Buddha!

An elementary knowledge of Mr. Fergusson's well-known handbook of architecture would have saved Mr. Lillie from so gross a blunder as to say: "Mr. James Fergusson was of opinion that the various details of the early Christian Church, nave, aisles, columns, semi-domed apse, cruciform ground plan, were borrowed *en bloc* from the Buddhists."[2] Had he even taken the pains to examine Mr. Fergusson's admirable work on *Indian and Eastern Architecture*,

[1] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 57.

[2] *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 206. — *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 183. — *Influence*, p. 177.

to which he refers, he would have seen that there is not a single cruciform ground-plan in all the Buddhist temples of India; he would likewise have learned from pages 120, 177, and 183–184, that Mr. Fergusson, far from bearing out his assertion, attributes to Buddhist architecture, in its later developments, very strong Greek influence.[1] But because Mr. Fergusson pointed out (p. 117) the curious resemblance of the cave-temple of Karle to the choir of Norwich cathedral, Mr. Lillie, in whose mind resemblance always means dependence, gratuitously attributed to him the borrowing *en bloc* of Christian architecture from Buddhist models. This remarkable bit of fancy sketching adorns at least three of his volumes.

The impression thus derived of Mr. Lillie's proneness to error, is by no means relieved by his way of

[1] What Mr. Fergusson says, p. 183, is worth quoting: "If, for instance, it is not true that the King of Taxila, in the first century spoke good Greek, as Apollonius of Tyana would persuade us he did, we know at least that he practised Greek architecture. If Saint Thomas did not visit Gondophares, King of Gandhara, in the same century, many at least of his countrymen did, and there is no *a priori* reason why he should not have done so also. . . . In short, when we realize how strongly European influence prevailed in Gandhara in the first five or six centuries after Christ, and think how many thousands, it may be, millions crossed the Indus going Eastward during that period, we ought not to be surprised at any amount of Western thought or art we may find in India." It is his conviction "that in the first century of the Christian era, the civilization of the West exercised an influence on the arts and religion of the inhabitants of this part of India far greater than has hitherto been suspected." Cf. also *Tree and Serpent Worship*, pp. 97–98, 161, note, and 221.

dealing with the Gospels and with Gospel teaching. The credulity he displays in ascribing a prechristian antiquity to everything Buddhistic is in striking contrast with his opposition to the best results of sound biblical criticism. Assuming the rôle of the most radical of critics, he champions the antiquated theory [1] of Hilgenfeld and Renan that the so-called *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, the Gospel of the Ebionites, was the primitive Gospel and the source of much in *Matthew* and *Luke*. The canonical Gospels he throws into the second century, and discovers interpolations on every other page.[2]

In his interpretation of Scripture he displays a lack of knowledge that is even less excusable. He quotes approvingly a passage from a work of L. Jacolliot — a writer ignored by the scholars of France — in which the prediction of Christ that his followers would suffer persecution, even from their nearest relatives (*Matthew*, x. 21), is made to read as if Christ bade the brother deliver up the brother to death.[3]

The familiar story in *Luke* (v. 18–26) of the miraculous cure which Christ, in proof of His power to forgive sins, wrought in the man sick of palsy, is appealed to as evidence that Christ held certain maladies to be the consequences of sinful conduct in previous lives, "for He distinctly announced that the

[1] Cf. Holtzman, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, Freiburg, 1898, p. 488.

[2] *Influence*, ch. vi.

[3] *Influence*, p. 57.

cure was effected not by any physical processes, but by annulling the sins which were the cause of his malady."[1]

The words of Christ in *Matthew*, xix. 11, 12, concerning the eunuchs who have made themselves such for the kingdom of heaven, are brought forth, together with *Apoc.* xiv. 1–4, as proof that He enjoined celibacy on his followers.[2] The decision of the Council of Jerusalem that the Gentile converts should observe the Mosaic custom of abstaining from things strangled and from blood (*Acts*, xv. 28–29) is distorted into an absolute prohibition to use any kind of flesh meat as food.[3]

The words of the angel to Zachary that the son to be born to him shall drink no wine or strong drink, coupled with other texts, as *Mark*, xv. 23, *Apoc.* xviii. 3, and xxi. 17, are made to do proof that abstinence from wine was likewise exacted of the primitive Christians.[4]

[1] *Influence*, p. 55.

[2] *Influence*, p. 141. — *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 210.

[3] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 211.

[4] *Ibid.* Mr. Lillie is open to the charge of reasoning in a circle. In his *Influence of Buddhism on Primitive Christianity*, p. 140, arguing that Christ was an Essene on the ground of resemblances in doctrine and practice, he notes that Christ imitated the Essenes in giving a new name to converts. This bit of information in regard to the Essenes is not to be found in any ancient writer. Its source is Mr. Lillie's *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 190, where we read, "*From the example of Christ we may infer that the Essenes gave a new name to their converts.*"

His memory fails him at times, as when on p. 213 of his *Buddha*

Grave errors like these are hardly calculated to inspire confidence in the teacher who has taken on himself the mission of leading his fellow-men from the gloom of Christianity into the light of Buddhism. Still men may make mistakes in detail and at the same time be right in their main line of argument. Can this much at least be said of Mr. Lillie?

Mr. Lillie's thesis is that the Buddhist origin of Christianity, which is patent from the close agreement it shows with the legend and teachings of Buddha, finds its explanation in the Essenism of Jesus, and in the Gnosticism of the writers of the New Testament. Now the Essenes, like their closely related cenobites in Egypt, the Therapeuts, were monks of Buddhist parentage, imbued consequently with the same traditions that characterized the disciples of Buddha in India and elsewhere. Gnosticism was likewise Buddhist metaphysics. And so Christianity could be naught else than a new phase of Buddhism, since Jesus was an Essene and Paul and John were Gnostics.

This is practically the same argument as that of Mr. Bunsen, and its exposition is characterized by the same defects. The fundamental principle run-

and Early Buddhism he argues that Jesus was an Essene and hence a Buddhist, because among other things He allowed His head to be anointed with the precious spikenard (*Matthew*, xxvi. 7), while only a few pages before (p. 192) he makes a statement that undermines his argument completely: "Buddhists and Essenes considered oil a defilement, though it was a sacred unguent in the Brahmanic and Jewish religions."

ning through it all is that resemblance means dependence, a principle which, taken without reserve, is sure to lead astray. This principle Mr. Lillie uses in the most reckless and uncritical manner. To show the indebtedness of Christianity to Buddhism he fancies analogies that have no existence, exaggerates those that are but remote and imperfect, and draws from Buddhist sources that by reason of time and distance could have had no possible influence on Christianity. With the agility of a legendary rishi, he flies for proofs, now to a Chinese version four or five centuries later than the Gospels, now to a Ceylonese text of the fifth century, now to a Burmese story of modern times, now to a rite in Tibet or China or Japan that is plainly posterior to the Christian rite with which it is compared. Similarities like these are just as valuable in his eyes as the resemblances that are plainly prechristian.

A similar looseness of thought is displayed in the other points of his argument. The Essenes and Therapeuts are declared to have been Buddhists, because in their discipline and mode of life they had a number of features found likewise in Buddhism. Jesus and John the Baptist are set down as Essenes because of a few points of resemblance with Essene doctrine and practice. John and Paul were Gnostics because several words found in their writings were words especially used by the Gnostics.

It needs but a grain of common-sense to detect the

sophistry of this kind of reasoning. To prove the identity of A with B, it does not suffice to show that they agree in some particulars merely. A perfect agreement is needed. If there are important facts in which they are at variance, they cannot be classed together. Apply this principle to Mr. Lillie's thesis, and the fair bubbles he has blown burst and disappear.

From the accounts given of the Essenes by Josephus, Philo, and Hippolytus, we know that the Essenes outdid the Pharisees in scrupulous observance of the Sabbath rest and of ceremonial purity. They abstained from meat and wine, even from the custom, so common in the East, of anointing the body with oil. They avoided food prepared by others as pollution. Bound together by oath into a rigidly exclusive association, they held aloof from the Temple feasts, and avoided the society, not only of publicans, but of the Pharisees themselves. Mere accidental contact even with an Essene of lower grade was held to be defiling, and had to be expiated by an ablution.

One must be blind indeed to see an exemplification of these principles in the life of Him who avoided the society of Essenes, and chose for companions men whom they despised; who mingled freely with publicans and sinners, and partook of their food; who laid hands on the sick, and healed on the Sabbath day; who allowed a penitent woman

to wash His feet with her tears, and a pious female host to anoint His head with oil; who supplied wine for the guests at the wedding feast, and fish for the hungry multitude; who tasted wine at the Last Supper, and partook of the Paschal lamb; who took part in the Temple feasts. The founder of Christianity, forsooth, a member of a sect that from the earliest times was branded by Christian writers as a heresy![1]

Scarcely less objectionable is Mr. Lillie's attempt to prove that the Essenes and Therapeuts were one with the Buddhists. As in the preceding instance, his chief reason is the fallacious argument from partial resemblance.[2] Like the Buddhists, the Es-

[1] Mr. Lillie argues that John the Baptist was an Essene because he was an ascetic. But it would seem that the Gospel statement that he was a Nazarite ought to account satisfactorily for his asceticism, unless, forsooth, the Nazarites of ancient Jewish times were also Essenes. The statement in both *Matthew* and *Mark* that John fed on locusts and wild honey is hardly in accord with his alléged Essene belief. But Mr. Lillie escapes this difficulty by conveniently suggesting that this double text is an interpolation. When, moreover, he says that John "induced a whole people to come out to the desert and adopt the Essene rites and their community of goods" (*Influence*, p. 138), he goes wide astray, for far from speaking like an Essene, John showed a leniency towards publicans and soldiers that every Essene would have condemned. "There came to him also publicans to be baptized, and they said unto him, Master, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort no one more than that which is appointed you. And soldiers also asked him, saying, And we, what must we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither exact anything wrongfully and be content with your wages." *Luke*, iii. 12–14.

[2] It is surprising to find a scholar of Professor Beal's ability led astray by this very fallacy. Cf. *Abstract of Four Lectures on Buddhist Literature in China*, London, 1882, pp. 159 ff.

senes and Therapeuts were monks, committed to a life of celibacy and asceticism; they abstained from meat and wine, and had all things in common. But unfortunately for the conclusion that Mr. Lillie hastens to draw, there are a number of fundamental differences which show unmistakably that neither the Therapeuts nor the Essenes conformed to Buddhist belief and practice.

Granting what many scholars of recent times deny, — that the Therapeuts really existed, — their use of the sacred Scriptures and their exclusive worship of Jehovah, as well as their custom of wearing white robes, of eating only after sunset, and of celebrating religious feasts late at night in which pious women were allowed to participate, stamp them as anything but Buddhists.[1]

Even more striking still is the contrast between Buddhism and Essenism. To the latter the yellow robe — the distinctive mark of Buddhism — was unknown. While the Essene would let himself starve to death rather than eat the food of those not of his communion, and hence supported himself by the labor of his hands, the Buddhist made it a funda-

[1] Since the appearance of the book of P. C. Lucius, *Die Therapeuten*, Strassburg, 1879, the essay formerly ascribed to Philo, *On the Contemplative Life*, from which our knowledge of the Therapeuts is drawn, has come to be held by many scholars as a spurious work of Christian origin. Cf. E. Schürer. *History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, N. Y. 1891, II. ii. p. 218, and III. p. 358; Schaff-Herzog, *Encyclopedia*, article, Therapeuts; *contra*, Smith & Wace, *Dictionary of American Biography*, article, Philo.

mental rule to live on the alms of others, and accepted invitations to dine at their homes. Of the purifying ablutions so essential to Essenism, the Buddhist knew nothing. Notwithstanding their life of seclusion, the Essenes were recognized as orthodox Jews. Their God was the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Their legislator, whose name Josephus does not mention, but whom scholars generally take to be Moses, was held in reverence near to excess. Their scriptures were those of Moses and the prophets, with perhaps a few apocalyptic works like the book of *Enoch* and that of the *Jubilees*. They strictly conformed to the law of circumcision. Their observance of the Sabbath rest was most rigid. They rejected with horror images and graven things. They believed in a future life where the good were eternally happy and the bad eternally wretched. A more absolute contrast between Buddhism and Essenism could not reasonably be desired to disprove their alleged identity.[1] When, besides, we consider that in all the Palestinian Jewish literature, there is not a trace of distinctively Buddhist teaching, when we bear in mind that the name of Buddha is not once associated with the Essenes, when we see scholars most competent to pronounce on the question, like Zeller, Lightfoot, Schürer, Gins-

[1] Cf. Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, II. ch. 8. — Hippolytus, *Refutation of Heresies*, IX. ch. 13-22 (Vol. V. of *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, N.Y. 1896).

berg, Edersheim, and Conybeare, denying even a remote connection of Essenism with Buddhism, we are amply justified in setting down the theory in question as an absolute failure.[1]

Mr. Lillie's attempt to prove that Saint John and Saint Paul were Gnostics is so puerile as scarcely to deserve notice. Ignoring the fact that their teachings are *toto cælo* different from the tenets of Gnosticism, he notes that both the prologue of *Saint John's Gospel* and the *Epistles to the Corinthians* and *Ephesians* contain words to which the Gnostics attached a special meaning. That these words, such as light, life, grace, truth, fulness, word, generation, have in the sacred texts the meanings peculiar to Gnosticism, he does not and cannot prove; hence his argument is utterly valueless. They indicate the presence of Gnosticism in the New Testament just as much and just as little as they do in the works of Plato and other pre-Gnostic writers, where the same words may be found.

It is idle to follow Mr. Lillie in his further attempt to show the Buddhist origin of early Gnosticism, for it is quite irrelevant. It is not amiss, however, to

[1] Mr. Lillie makes too large a demand on our credulity when he asks us to see in Jewish Essenism a new edition of Buddhism with the great central figure, Buddha, left out. "The Buddhists," he says, "appear not to have obtruded Sakya Muni's name, but to have fathered their teachings on some local Buddha." *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 200. Buddhism without Buddha is as great a paradox as Christianity without Christ.

note that in trying to make good this point he has recourse to a fallacy. The early Church authorities, he argues, indirectly witness to the Buddhist source of early Gnosticism, for they exacted of Gnostic converts the abjuration of the doctrines of Bodda and Skuthianos.[1] But the truth is that those of whom this formula of abjuration was exacted were not the early Gnostics, but converts from Manichæism, a sect of the third century.[2]

Having thus got a general idea of the character of the several works that aim to show the indebtedness of Christianity to Buddhism, let us proceed to the careful examination of the main argument common to all, which is based on the comparison of the points of resemblance in both religions.

[1] *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 235.

[2] Ἀναθεματίζω καὶ καταθεματίζω Ζαράδην καὶ Βόδδαν καὶ Σκυθίανον, τοὺς πρὸ Μανιχαίων γεγονότας. A. Galland, *Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*, Venetiis, 1767, iii. p. 611.

CHAPTER II

EXAGGERATED RESEMBLANCES

Spurious evidence used to impugn the originality of the Gospels classified under three heads: exaggerations, anachronisms, fictions — EXAGGERATIONS — The pre-existence of Jesus in heaven contrasted with that ascribed to Buddha — Divergent circumstances of birth — Simeon *versus* Asita — The fast of Jesus compared with that of Buddha — Unfair attempts to exaggerate the resemblances between the temptation of Jesus and that of Buddha — The transfiguration of Jesus without a close counterpart in the Buddha-legend.

IN the works of Bunsen, Seydel, and Lillie, great stress is laid on the comparison of those characteristics that Buddhism and Christianity are supposed to have in common; for it is argued that where there is resemblance, there is dependence. Hence, the more numerous the similarities discovered in the two religions, the more imposing the evidence in proof of Buddhist influence on Christianity.

Reserving for later discussion the soundness of the principle that resemblance means dependence, let us first put aside those alleged resemblances that have no right to a place in the argument. The amount of this spurious evidence is surprisingly large; for in their zeal to make the points of contact as numerous as possible, the writers in question have gone far beyond the limits of prudence and fairness.

First, in not a few instances, where comparison would otherwise be legitimate, the alleged resemblance is grossly exaggerated; secondly, a goodly number of these pretended similarities are drawn from Buddhist sources that are posterior to the Christian; thirdly, a still larger number are pure fictions. Let us, then, for the sake of clearness, examine, first, the exaggerations; secondly, the anachronisms; and thirdly, the fictions, that have been pressed into service to show the indebtedness of Christianity to Buddhism.

EXAGGERATIONS

Under the head of exaggerations should be classed not only those parallels that are represented to be much more complete than the facts warrant, but those as well which at first sight are striking, but which prove on examination to be of little significance on account of their many points of contrast. We begin with the latter.

(1) Both Professor Seydel[1] and Mr. Lillie[2] call attention to the fact that as Jesus is believed to have enjoyed an existence in heaven previous to His incarnation, so in like manner Buddha is represented as dwelling in the Tusita heaven till the time came for his descent in the form of an elephant into his mother Maya. But this parallel is not nearly so remarkable

[1] Op. cit. p. 295.

[2] *Influence of Buddhism on Primitive Christianity*, p. 23.

as it appears at first sight. The existence of Jesus in heaven is unique, for it is the existence of God Himself. That of Buddha is not extraordinary, being simply what was common to hundreds of the Bodhisattvas, who by the merits of their previous births raised themselves to this high but impermanent condition. Jesus existed in heaven from eternity. Buddha's life in the Tusita heaven was of very limited extent, having been preceded by many other kinds of existence, some honorable and some without honor. Eighty-three times he had lived as an ascetic, fifty-eight times as a king, twenty-four times as a Brahman, twenty times as the god Sakkha, forty-three times as a tree-god, five times as a slave, once as a devil-dancer, not to speak of animal existences as a rat, pig, hare, lion, jackal, pigeon, deer, and others.

It is hardly from a source like this that the lofty conception of Christ's pre-existence in heaven could have been derived. And yet, strange to say, Professor Seydel holds this to be one of the five striking resemblances that cannot be fitly explained except on the hypothesis of a borrowing on the part of Christianity from Buddhism.

(2) In the circumstances of the birth of Christ, all three writers think they find an echo of the Buddha-legend.[1] But here again the resemblances are only superficial and are less remarkable than the contrasts.

[1] Bunsen, Op. cit. p. 34. — Seydel, Op. cit. p. 136. — Lillie, *Influence*, p. 26.

It is true that Christ, like Buddha, is of royal lineage. But Joseph and Mary lived in poverty and obscurity, whereas the parents of Buddha are depicted as king and queen reigning in great magnificence.

Maya, like Mary, was delivered while on a journey. But Maya was enjoying an excursion undertaken at her own desire, in the company of an immense procession of gods, warriors, and waiting-women; and she gave birth to her son under the Sala-tree with every circumstance of luxury and splendor that oriental fancy could invent to enhance the dignity of Buddha. What a striking contrast with the painful journey of Mary to the distant village of Bethlehem, and the humiliating and lonely surroundings in which Jesus was born!

The Buddha-legend states that at Buddha's birth, the earth was shaken, showers of perfumed rain and lotus-blossoms fell from the cloudless sky, while heavenly spirits sang and played music. The latter incident reminds one of the angel-songs at Christ's birth, but is not a resemblance of so striking a character as to suggest an historic connection.[1]

[1] *Buddha Charita*, b. i. *Romantic Legend of Sakya Buddha*, ch. viii. In the latter is a heavenly song that bears a resemblance to the angelic announcement to the shepherds. "To-day Bodhisattva is born on earth, to give joy and peace to men and devas, to shed light in the dark places, and to give sight to the blind" (p. 56). But this song being five centuries later than its Gospel parallel cannot be made to tell against the originality of the latter.

When Buddha was born, he is said to have taken seven steps and to have exclaimed: "I am the greatest being in the whole world. I am the best guide in the world. This my last birth."[1]

To this utterance which, for greater effectiveness, he gives in the elaborated form peculiar to the Chinese version of the sixth century, *The Romantic Legend of Sakya Buddha*, Mr. Lillie[2] brings forward a parallel, not from the canonical Gospels, but from the apocryphal *Gospel of the Infancy*. There the divine Infant, addressing Mary from His cradle, is made to say:

"I am Jesus the Son of God, the Word whom thou didst bring forth according to the declaration of the angel Gabriel to thee, and my Father hath sent me for the salvation of the world."

Now if it were to be granted that this passage betrays a Buddhist origin, the originality of the inspired Christian records would not be shaken in the least. The fact that it had a place only in a work rejected as spurious and unorthodox, would tell rather in favor of the exclusive and independent character of the canonical Gospels. It would not, indeed, be very significant to find in an apocryphal work traces of Buddhist lore, since such books are of more recent date than the four Gospels, and since, besides, some of them took their rise in Persia in the interest of heretical schools.

[1] *Lalita Vistara*, vii.

[2] *Influence*, p. 27.

But the present Buddhist parallel, reduced to its primitive form, does not present so remarkable a resemblance to the incident related in the *Gospel of the Infancy* as to call seriously into question its independent origin. The thoughts to which the infant Jesus and the infant Buddha are made to give expression, are not the same. The only real point of agreement is the precocious use of the faculty of speech. But to account for this similarity, it is not necessary to have recourse to the *Lalita Vistara*, which is less ancient than the *Gospel of the Infancy*. It is not unlikely that the incident attributed to the infant Jesus was suggested by a too literal interpretation of Hebrews, x. 5–7:

"Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith: Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not, but a body thou hast fitted to use. Holocausts for sin did not please thee. Then said I: behold I come. In the head of the book it is written of me that I should do Thy will, O God."

(3) There is, indeed, a rather striking resemblance between the venerable Simeon prophesying the future greatness of the Infant Jesus, and the aged rishi Asita foretelling to the king that his infant son will one day become a Buddha. As might be expected, this point of comparison does not fail to be set forth by each of the three writers under review.[1] But the circumstances of the Gospel incident are quite unlike

[1] Bunsen, Op. cit. p. 36. Seydel, Op. cit. p. 139. Lillie, *Influence*, p. 29.

those of the Buddhist parallel. Simeon's prophecy is given on the occasion of the presentation of Jesus in the temple. The prophecy over the infant Buddha is made, not in the temple of the gods, but in the palace, to which the aged rishi, on learning the birth of the wonderful infant, betook himself by magic flight from the distant Himalayas. Simeon, rejoicing that his eyes have rested on the Saviour of Israel, declares himself ready to depart from earthly life. Asita weeps because he sees he will not live to see the day when the child shall have attained to Buddhaship.[1] It may well be doubted whether stories presenting contrasts like these have any affinity with each other.

(4) The forty days' fast of Jesus, with its well-known prototypes in the Old Testament of Moses[2] and of Elias,[3] ought surely to be one of the last things in the Gospel narrative to be suspected of Buddhist origin. Yet even here common-sense has had to give way to the mania for discovering a Buddhist pattern for everything Christian. But the parallel proposed is anything but complete. The Buddha-legend tells how Buddha, after overcoming Mara, and attaining to perfect enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree, remained for seven weeks near it, taking no food and enjoying

[1] Mr. Bunsen's statement that Asita "returns rejoicing to his mountain home, for his eyes have seen the promised and expected Saviour" (Op. cit. p. 36), is an example of his gratuitous application of Scripture language to Buddha-legend.

[2] *Ex.* xxxiv. 28. [3] *III Kings* xix. 8.

the bliss of emancipation.[1] To make this forty-nine days' fast more like that of Jesus, which was followed by the temptation, Professor Seydel,[2] in flat contradiction of the legend, pretends that this fast preceded Buddha's victorious conflict and enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree. Mr. Lillie[3] follows blindly in his footsteps, and falls into the same ditch.

It is to be noted that this is one of the five parallels that, in the mind of Professor Seydel, betray unmistakably the presence in the Gospels of Buddhist influence. This story of Jesus' fast, he argues, cannot be original, for it does not fit in with the attitude of Jesus towards the asceticism of John the Baptist. But, not to follow an ascetic life is one thing, to avoid all practice of fasting is another. That Jesus both practised fasting and taught his disciples to fast, the Gospels give ample evidence. Had Professor Seydel given this subject a little more thought, he would have recognized that the same argument could be turned against the propriety of Buddha's fast, since, only a few days before, he had abandoned as useless the rigorous mortifications of the Brahman ascetics.

(5) In the Buddha-legend, there is an analogy to the Gospel story of the temptation of Jesus by Satan. But in making the comparison, both Mr. Bunsen and Mr. Lillie are guilty of unwarranted exaggerations.

[1] According to the most ancient account, this period of fasting and contemplation lasted but four weeks. Cf. *S. B. E.* XIII. pp. 73 ff.

[2] Op. cit. p. 154.

[3] *Influence*, p. 44.

To bring the Buddhist parallel closer to the threefold temptation of Christ, Mr. Lillie pretends that Buddha likewise underwent a threefold temptation under the Bodhi-tree.

"The first temptation of Buddha," he says,[1] "when Mara assailed him under the Bo-tree, is precisely similar to that of Jesus. His long fast had very nearly killed him. 'Sweet creature, you are at the point of death. Sacrifice food.' This meant, eat a portion to save your life."

Now in the first place, this incident, which is related in chapter xviii. of the *Lalita Vistara*, is said to have taken place, not under the Bodhi-tree, but just before he abandoned as useless the austere life of an ascetic.[2] Moreover, there is a difference between the alleged temptation of Buddha and that of Jesus. What Satan asked of Jesus was not so much to eat food, for the end of the fast was already at hand, but rather to take occasion of His hunger to make a display of His divine power. "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." But what Mara proposes to Gotama is to abandon his practice of undue asceticism, and preserve his life by taking food. Though this advice is rejected as an evil temptation, its wisdom is proved by the subsequent conduct of Gotama himself, for, convinced of the unprofitableness of a life of constant fasting, he adopts the very course suggested by Mara.

[1] *Influence*, p. 45. [2] Cf. also *S. B. E.* X. p. 69.

"The second temptation of Mara," he goes on to say,[1] "is also like one of Satan's. The tempter by a miracle shows Buddha the glorious city of Kapilavastu, twisting the earth round like the wheel of a potter to do this. He offers to make him a mighty King of Kings [Chakravartin] in seven days (Bigandet, p. 65)."

Here, again, the comparison of this so-called second temptation with the well-known second temptation of Jesus, as told in the fourth chapter of *Luke*, is marred by gross exaggeration.

First, in calling this the second temptation and making it happen under the Bodhi-tree, he sets himself in flat contradiction to the authoritative teaching of the legend as known to both Northern and Southern schools. There is no authority in his favor, except the Chinese version of the sixth century, known as the *Romantic Legend*. The very version to which he makes reference, the life of Buddha translated by Bishop Bigandet, agrees with the *Nidana Katha* in assigning this temptation to the night when Buddha was abandoning his home and making his escape from the city.

More objectionable still is the fictitious description which Mr. Lillie gives of the temptation itself. Just as Satan showed Christ all the kingdoms of the earth, so Mara is represented as showing by a miracle the glorious city of Kapilavastu. This is a pure fiction,

[1] *Influence*, p. 45.

for which there is not a single authority, not even the authority of Bishop Bigandet, on which he seemingly relies. Here we are told that as Buddha was fleeing from Kapilavastu, he repressed the rising desire to turn back and take one last look at the magnificent city, whereupon the earth turned like a potter's wheel "so that the very object he denied himself the satisfaction of contemplating came of itself under his eyes."[1] This marvellous incident is not ascribed to Mara's power, nor has it any connection with the foregoing story of the temptation. The latter is told in a few words. Mara appears to Buddha in his flight from the city, and urges him to return, for in seven days he will become a universal monarch. Buddha rejects his advice with scorn. It is to be noted that Mara, unlike Satan, does not pretend that universal dominion is in his gift, but simply acts the part of a prophetic adviser.

But besides bearing only a superficial resemblance to the story of Christ's temptation to universal power, this parallel lacks all likelihood of having inspired the Gospel story. For while it is common to the Southern forms of the legend, it is absent from the earlier scriptures of the Northern school, even the *Lalita Vistara*.

The so-called third temptation to sensuality by Mara's daughters has nothing in common with the Gospel story.

[1] Bigandet, Op. cit. I. p. 63.

The assertion made by Mr. Bunsen [1] and repeated by Mr. Lillie [2] that, after Buddha's triumph over the tempter, angels comforted him, is another illustration of the reckless manner in which Buddhism is compared with Christianity. The Buddha-legend simply states that after Buddha's successful conflict with Mara under the Bodhi-tree, the gods and heavenly spirits, who had fled in dire fear, returned and did homage to him as the greatest of beings.

(6) The story of Moses coming down from Mount Sinai with countenance of dazzling splendor,[3] bears but a distant resemblance to the story of Christ's transfiguration on the mount. Yet the origin of the latter is sought in Buddhist parallels that are far less striking.

Professor Seydel [4] gives his preference to the incident preceding Buddha's death, when his body shone with so great a brightness as to dim the splendor of the golden robe that had been put upon him.

Mr. Bunsen traces the Gospel story to the tale in the Romantic Legend [5] that Buddha, coming one time to a mountain of Ceylon, sat down beneath a tree, when his body began to shine like a golden image, so that the people took him for the mountain spirit. This parallel, besides being so superficial, labors under the fatal disadvantage of having no

[1] Op. cit. p. 40.
[2] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 107.
[3] *Ex.* xxxiv. 29.
[4] Op. cit. 240.
[5] *Ibid.* pp. 177–178.

earlier authority for its antiquity than the Chinese version, just mentioned, of the sixth century.

The parallel proposed by Mr. Lillie [1] is the incident of Buddha's descent from the Tusita heaven after preaching the Law to his mother. The gods prepared three ladders, the tops of which reached to the heavens and rested against the summit of the Mienmo mountain. As Buddha descended the middle ladder in company with heavenly spirits, fanning him, playing the harp, and shading him with a golden parasol, he allowed the six glories to stream forth from his body to the people below, who witnessed the wonderful sight with astonishment and joy.[2]

In calling this incident a transfiguration on a mount, Mr. Lillie lays himself open to the charge of exaggerating. He also seems to overlook the fact that while the story of the descent from heaven by the triple ladder is undoubtedly prechristian, the transfiguration incident, being found solely in the Burmese *Life of Buddha*, is not free from the grave suspicion of being of comparatively recent origin.[3]

[1] *Influence*, p. 63.

[2] Cf. Bigandet, Op. cit. I. p. 225.

[3] In his *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 191, he wrongly gives Rockhill as an additional authority. In the *Life of Buddha* by the latter, p. 81, the descent of Buddha is related, but no mention is made of the brilliant rays emitted from his body.

CHAPTER III

ANACHRONISMS

Resemblances drawn from Buddhist sources plainly prechristian, alone legitimate in the present comparison — Kanishka's conquest of Northern India in 78 A. D. the probable cause of separation of the Buddhists of the North from those of the South: hence Buddhist parallels not known to both Northern and Southern schools are of doubtful prechristian origin — Further means of control afforded by the different early versions of the Buddha-legend — ANACHRONISMS — The genealogy of Buddha — The presentation of the infant Buddha in the temple — The corresponding Gospel story not out of harmony with Jewish custom — The school-scene — The gift of tongues — The augmenting of food at the marriage-feast — Lamentation of women over Buddha's corpse — The Chinese variant — Buddha's descent into hell — The Buddhist parable of the lost son — Parallels to *John*, viii. 57, and to *Matthew*, v. 28—Sadhu—Lamaistic resemblances to certain features of Catholicism — The Kwanyin liturgy — The swastika.

THE three writers under review argue very largely on the principle that, since Buddhism is more ancient than Christianity, every resemblance which the former offers to Christian rites and Christian teachings may be used to show the indebtedness of the Gospels to the religion of Buddha. A more glaring sophism could hardly be employed. It would be like arguing that because the Jewish and Brahman religions are older than Buddhism, the

contents of the *Maccabees* and of the *Ramayana* antedate what is oldest in the Buddhist scriptures. In Buddhism, as in other historic religions, there has been a gradual growth of legendary and doctrinal speculations. In its sacred literature much that is comparatively recent has found a place side by side with what is truly ancient. And hence it is a dictate of sound criticism that, in a comparison established to show the possibility of Buddhist influence on Christian thought, all resemblances must be withheld that cannot be traced to Buddhist sources plainly prechristian.

Now it happens that a fairly reliable means is at hand of discerning in Buddhist literature what may rightly be credited with an antiquity greater than that of the Gospels. It is the comparison of the scriptures held sacred by the Northern and Southern schools.

The unacquaintance of the Southern school with Council of Kashmir, held under King Kanishka, shows that at the close of the first century of the Christian era, the Buddhists of the South were already cut off from those of the North. There is every reason to believe that this separation was due primarily to political and not to religious causes.

Down to the time of Kanishka, the prevailing form of Buddhism in Northern India was practically identical with what was professed in the South. In both parts, the religion was derived from Magadha,

being the fruit of the Buddhist propaganda inspired by Asoka and continued under his successors. The Ceylonese tradition of the monks from the Northern countries coming in great numbers to take part in the dedication of the Mahathupa, erected by King Duttha Gamini,[1] bears witness that in the latter part of the second century B. C., the North and South were still in close communion. Nor do we find any religious cause for a separation in the next two centuries. It is true, the internal unity of the Buddhist order was disturbed by many dissenting schools, but this state of things existed from the beginning and characterized Buddhism wherever it existed.[2] No growing division, however, between North and South was yet discernible. The Mahayana school was still insignificant. It was only long after the establishment of Kanishka's empire that this school supplanted the earlier form of Buddhism in the North. In the absence, then, of an adequate religious cause, the separation of the Buddhists of the North from those of the South finds its natural explanation in the conquest of Northern India by Kanishka in 78 A. D. The separation was thus at first political. The subsequent spread of the Mahayana innovations throughout the empire to the absorption of the ancient faith gave rise to the great schism of the Northern school.

[1] Cf. Turnour, *Mahawanso*, p. 171.

[2] Even in Asoka's day, there were no less than seventeen minor dissensions.

This point is of great importance, for it enables us to determine with considerable precision those Buddhist parallels that have no solid claim to an age as great as their corresponding Christian analogies. For it is plain that only what is common to the two schools can be traced back with certainty to the time of their separation.[1]

It would be rash to assert on the other hand that

[1] The mistake is commonly made of taking the Buddha-legend to be in all its details as old as the Bharhut stupa, whose sculptures date, according to Cunningham, 250–200 B. C , according to Fergusson, 200–150 B. C. (Dr. Hultzsch of the Archæological Survey maintains that they belong to the second or third century B. C. Cf. his article, *The Bharhaut Inscriptions*, in the *Indian Antiquary*, XXI. p. 225.) But the only features of the biography to which these sculptures bear witness are the descent of Buddha into his mother in the form of an elephant, the triple ladder by which he came down from heaven after preaching to the gods, the gift of the Jetavana monastery, Indra Sala-guha, and, possibly, the scene of the rishis arrested in their flight on the occasion of the ploughing-match. Cf. A. Cunningham, *The Stupa of Bharhut*, London, 1879, p. 14. What the extent of the Buddha-legend was at that early period is impossible to say with any degree of certainty. In all probability, it was very meagre. Not a few writers have appealed to the Sanchi sculptures in evidence of the existence in Asoka's day of the story of Buddha's temptation and other features of the legend. Among these are Mr. Lillie (*Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 18), Professor Seydel (Op. cit. p. 98), and Professor Beal (*Romantic Legend*, p. vii.; *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, p. 6, 131); in like manner Professor Kern (*Manual of Indian Buddhism*, p. 2) and Rhys Davids (*Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. lix) base the antiquity of the *Jatakas* on the sculptures of Sanchi as well as those of Bharhut. They confound the age of the stupa itself (third, perhaps fifth century, B. C.) with that of the gateways (first century A. D.) on which the sculptured scenes from the Buddha-legend are found. Cf. Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 100; A. Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes*, p. 270.

all those features that are the distinctive and exclusive possession of either school have arisen after 78 A. D. The possibility cannot be denied of a legend having a local existence from prechristian times in a Buddhist locality of Northern India, and being unknown to the Southern school, or *vice versa*. But such a possibility does not give sufficient probability to any particular parallel to justify its use in the argument under criticism. Moreover, in the great majority of parallels peculiar to Northern Buddhism, there is a further means of control. For as most of them are pretended incidents in the life of Buddha, their absence from the earlier known forms of the Buddha-legend, where we have a right to expect them, betrays the fact that they are later accretions to the ancient biography. On the other hand, all parallels found only in the literature of the Southern school may be cast aside, since it is only through the Buddhists of the North that Christianity could well have been affected.[1]

Applying these principles, we find a goodly number of anachronisms in the comparisons instituted by the writers under review.

(1) Mr. Lillie,[2] following Professor Seydel's ex-

[1] It might be objected that the *Milinda Panha*, though composed in Northwest India about the time of Christ, has no place in Northern Buddhist literature. But this is an exception that bears out the rule. Being a flat contradiction of the teachings of the Mahayana school, this work was destined to be ignored wherever Mahayana doctrine gained exclusive recognition.

[2] *Influence of Buddhism on Prim. Christianity*, p. 24.

ample,[1] notes that the genealogy of Christ is paralleled by one that is applied to Buddha. But, aside from the fact that the very commonness of genealogies among the Jews is enough to explain why one should be recounted of Christ, the genealogy of Buddha is a topic that is not to be found in the Northern Buddhist scriptures at all, and even in the Southern school, is drawn from sources too late to merit consideration. The authority to which Mr. Lillie appeals, the *Dipavansa*, is a Ceylonese work of a date not much earlier than 400 A. D.[2]

(2) Great stress is laid on the Buddhist parable to the Gospel story of the presentation of the infant Saviour in the temple. In the eighth chapter of the *Lalita Vistara*, we read that when the child Buddha was borne in an immense procession of warriors, maids, and deities to the temple of the gods to give them worship, their images prostrated themselves at his feet to show that he was the greatest of all beings.

Mr. Bunsen,[3] who gratuitously combines with this incident the story of Buddha's precocity, also asserts, without a particle of authority, that the incident took place when the child was twelve years of age.

[1] Op. cit. p. 105.

[2] Cf. *S. B. E.* X. p. xiii.

[3] Op. cit. p. 37. His words are worth quoting as a specimen of his utterly unfair and misleading presentation of alleged Buddhist resemblances. "When twelve years old, the child is presented in the temple, on which occasion forthwith all statues rise and throw

Mr. Lillie,[1] in order to give a greater show of substance to this very shadowy parallel, has recourse to the legend in the apocryphal Gospel of the Infancy, that the presence of Mary and the infant Jesus in a village of Egypt caused a certain idol to fall prostrate from its pedestal, a tale that smacks rather of the Old Testament story of the prostration of the idol Dagon in the presence of the ark.[2]

Professor Seydel[3] finds this parallel so striking that he reckons it as one of the five pieces of evidence that point unmistakably to the indebtedness of the Gospels to Buddhist scriptures. He calls attention to the natural fitness of the story in the Buddha-legend, whereas in the Gospel, despite the statement of the evangelist, there was no reason for presenting the child Jesus in the temple. But this objection is of little weight. According to the law of Moses, the first-born son of every household had to be redeemed at the price of five shekels of the sanctuary, and every mother, after giving birth to a child, had to make an offering of purification. Now though the presence in the temple of neither child nor mother was indispensable for the fulfilment of these rites, yet, as Edersheim has pointed out in his

themselves at his feet, even the statues of Indra and Brahma. He explains and asks learned questions; he excels all those who enter into competition with him. Yet he waits till he has reached his thirtieth year before teaching in public, surrounded by his disciples."

[1] *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 29. *Influence*, p. 27.

[2] *I Kings*, v. 1 ff.

[3] Op. cit. p. 146.

excellent *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*,[1] "mothers who were within convenient distance of the temple, and especially the more earnest among them, would naturally attend personally in the temple; and in such cases, when practicable, the redemption of the first-born and the purification of his mother would be combined."

But even if the parallel were much closer than it really is, it would have to be rejected as an unquestionable anachronism. For, first of all, it forms no part of the ancient legend as known to the Southern school, and hence has no respectable claim to an age as old as the Gospels. And in the second place, it is absent from all the earlier versions known to the Northern school. It is not to be found in the *Buddha Charita*, nor in any of the Chinese versions of the Buddha-legend belonging to the first three centuries. There is thus good reason for not assigning to this parallel an origin earlier than the third century.[2]

(3) One of Mr. Lillie's most cherished parallels[3] is the school-scene in the tenth chapter of the *Lalita Vistara*,[4] where the boy Gotama, taken to the hall of writing with a splendid escort of ten thousand children and a hundred thousand girls, in a shower

[1] B. II. ch. vii.

[2] For the same reason, the *Lalita Vistara* in its present form, at least, cannot be credited with an age greater than the third century.

[3] *Influence*, p. 30. Professor Seydel makes use of it as well, Op. cit. p. 149.

[4] It is found also in the Romantic legend, ch. xi.

of flowers and to the sound of one hundred thousand instruments of music, astonishes the schoolmaster by enumerating sixty-four different kinds of writing, and by explaining how every letter of the alphabet should be pronounced. Mr. Lillie shows how strikingly similar is the exhibition of precocity ascribed to the child Jesus in the twentieth chapter of the *First Gospel of the Infancy*, where he puts to shame His master Zacchæus by the wisdom He displays in setting forth the meaning of every letter of the alphabet.

The irrelevancy of seeking in apocryphal writings resemblances to points of Buddhist lore has already been shown. But apart from this, the priority of the Buddhist parable is open to serious misgivings. In the first place, the story could not have arisen much before the Christian era, for it presupposes on the part of the people of India not only the comparatively late custom of teaching the youth the art of reading and writing, but also, what must have been later still, a wide-spread acquaintance with very many different kinds of alphabets.

Though the knowledge of letters in India is probably as ancient as the century in which Buddha was born, yet the use of writing for literary purposes seems to have come into vogue only in the last two or three centuries preceding the birth of Christ. The older Vinaya texts, which describe minutely the daily life of the monks and the furnishings of their rooms, make no mention of writing or of the instru-

ments of writing. It was only in the century preceding the Christian era that the sacred traditions of Buddhism were first committed to manuscript.[1]

In Asoka's day, but two forms of writing seem to have prevailed in India, the Ariano-Pali, common to Bactria and Northwest India, and the Indo-Pali, peculiar to the inscriptions in the other parts of his vast realm. Not till long after his time could the story have been invented which ascribes to Gotama and his contemporaries a knowledge of many diverse forms of writing.

Among the sixty-four different kinds of alphabets which the youthful Gotama enumerates, the Chinese

[1] Cf. Max Müller, *Hist. of Anc. Sansk. Lit.*, pp. 507 ff.; Weber, *Indische Studien*, V. pp. 18 ff.; Oldenberg, *Ancient India, its Language and Religions*, Chicago, 1896, p 22. The alphabet from which all existing forms of Indian writing have been developed, is that employed by Asoka in all his inscriptions save that of Kapur-di-giri in the Northwest. The origin of this alphabet, variously styled Indo-Pali, Magadhi, Maurya, Asoka, is disputed. Some scholars, as Prinsep, Wilson, Senart, Halévy, derive it from Greek sources. Others, as Lassen, Cunningham, Dowson, pronounce it of native origin. But the most probable opinion is that it is a development of a Semitic script, Sabæan or Babylonian, which seems to have been introduced into India by merchants about the sixth century B.C. So Weber, Max Müller, Bühler, Lenormant, and others. Cf. Isaac Taylor, *The Alphabet, an Account of the Origin and Development of Letters.* London, 1883. Vol. II. pp. 304 ff.

The alphabet of the Kapur-di-giri inscription, generally known as Ariano-Pali, is identical with the script of most of the Indo-Bactrian coins. It is of Iranian (Aramæan) origin and was probably introduced into the Panjab in the fifth century, B.C., soon after the country was reduced to a satrapy under the dominion of Darius. Cf. Taylor, Op. cit. pp. 256 ff.

writing is mentioned. It is very likely that the knowledge of the Chinese became popular in Northern India through the embassy sent by Ming-ti in 62 A. D. Thus, from internal evidence alone, there is good reason for suspecting that this legend did not take form till some time after the birth of Christ.

This suspicion becomes confirmed when we examine the biography known to Southern Buddhists, and find this legend wanting. Nor is it present in the earliest story of Buddha's life belonging to the Northern canon, the *Buddha Charita*, which would in all probability have made room for the legend had it existed at that time, for it notes the precocity of the youthful Gotama.

"When he had passed the period of childhood and reached that of middle youth, the young prince learned in a few days the various sciences suitable to his race, which generally took many years to master." [1]

The earliest Buddhist work in which the legend is mentioned is the Chinese life of Buddha translated in the year 194 A. D.[2] But the corresponding legend about the precocity of the boy Jesus was already known in the Roman empire at this time, for Irenæus of Lyons in his work *Adversus Hæreses*, b. i. ch. xx. (written in the time that Eleutherus was bishop of Rome, 177–190), taxes the Gnostic heretics for teaching this very fable about our Lord. This im-

[1] Op. cit. ii. 24.

[2] Cf. *S. B. E.* XIX. p. xvii.

plies that the legend must have been known to the Gnostics as early as the middle of the second century, and, perhaps, even earlier. The priority of the Buddhist parallel is thus, to say the least, very uncertain.

(4) Professor Seydel[1] calls attention to the striking similarity of the story of the miraculous gift of tongues told of Saint Peter in the second chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles* and that attributed to Buddha at the preaching of his first sermon at Benares. The gods and heavenly beings were there as well as men; and though Buddha spoke the language of Magadha, they all thought that he was speaking in the tongue with which each one was familiar.

Since this incident is absent from the accounts of Buddha's sermon as told in all the early forms of the story of his life, and since the earliest authority it enjoys is the *Pujawaliya*, a Ceylonese work of the thirteenth century,[2] it has no legitimate place in a comparison instituted to show the presence of Buddhist thought in Christian teaching.

(5) The same fatal objection applies to the use which Mr. Lillie[3] makes of the story of Buddha multiplying food at a marriage feast. The story is not found in the scriptures of the Southern school at all, nor in the early biographies of the Northern canon.

[1] Op. cit. p. 248.
[2] Cf. R. S. Hardy, *Manual of Budhism*, p. 187, also p. 518.
[3] *Influence*, p. 60.

Its only authority is the Chinese version of the sixth century, the *Romantic Legend of Sakya Buddha*.

(6) "The newly discovered fragments of the Gospel of Peter," says the same writer,[1] "gives striking evidence of the haphazard way in which extracts from the Buddhist books seem to have been sprinkled among the Gospels. It records that Mary Magdalen, 'taking with her her friends,' went to the sepulchre of Jesus to 'place themselves beside Him and perform the rites' of wailing, beating breasts, etc. Amrapali and other courtesans did the same rites to Buddha, and the disciples were indignant that impure women should have 'washed his dead body with their tears.' (Rockhill, *Tibetan Life*, p. 153.)"

In this passage we have a further instance of Mr. Lillie's looseness of thought and recklessness of assertion. First of all, it is to be noted that what he pretends to draw from Mr. Rockhill's *Life of the Buddha* is to be found there only in part. Not a word is said about Amrapali and other courtesans. All that we are told is that at the council of Rajagriha, the venerable Kasyapa declared Ananda unworthy of taking part in the proceedings, because on several occasions he had acted wrongly. One of his faults is thus told. "Moreover, thou didst show to corrupt women the golden body of the Blessed One, which was then sullied by their tears."

Now, even if this alleged parallel were prechristian,

[1] *Influence*, p. 66.

it would be far from justifying the conclusion which Mr. Lillie draws. But to base its antiquity on a Tibetan tradition betrays a still greater lack of judgment, the more so, as the primitive form of the story, which exists in the canonical scriptures, and which alone can be accounted prechristian, offers no ground for a parallel at all.

In the *Book of the Great Decease*, we are told that the Mallas of Kusinara, having learned that Buddha was about to pass away, came in deep grief with their wives and children, to see him for the last time, and were admitted by Ananda in family groups into the presence of his dying master.[1]

It is in allusion to this incident that at the council of Rajagriha, the following charge was made against Ananda by some of his brother monks:

"This, also, friend Ananda, was ill done by thee, in that thou causedst the body of the Blessed One to be saluted by women first, so that by their weeping, the body of the Blessed One was defiled by tears. Confess that fault." [2]

(7) It is from this same source that the Chinese Buddhists derived their story of a woman weeping over the body of Buddha and moistening his feet with her tears. It was found by Professor Beal in a Chinese version of uncertain date and mentioned in his *Abstract of Four Lectures on Buddhist Literature*.[3] Curious

[1] *S. B. E.* XI. p. 103.
[2] *Chullavagga*, xi. 1, 10.—*S. B. E.* XX. p. 379.
[3] pp. 75 and 165.

to note, Mr. Bunsen[1] seized upon this as the prototype of the Gospel story of the penitent woman bathing in tears the feet of Jesus. It is plain that this parallel, like the preceding, must be rejected as an anachronism.

(8) Mr. Lillie[2] informs us that "Buddha, like Christ, preached to the spirits in prison. . . . The Chinese hold that every thousand years, Buddha, in the form of a beautiful young man, goes down to the hell Avichi, and clears that region of suffering."

Since this doctrine, which is wholly out of joint with the teaching of Buddha, is unknown to the Buddhism of India, and is nothing else than a late product of Chinese speculation, it is hard to see how it could have exerted any influence on the formation of early Christian dogma.

(9) The beautiful Gospel parable of the prodigal son is not allowed to pass unchallenged. Both Professor Seydel[3] and Mr. Lillie[4] call attention to a corresponding story in a canonical book of the Northern school. In the fourth chapter of the *Lotus of the True Law*, Buddha's disciples, overjoyed at the prospect of being predestined to supreme enlightenment, illustrate their unexpected good fortune by a parable. A poor wanderer, after an absence of many years, comes without knowing it to his father's home. The

[1] Op. cit. p. 49.
[2] *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 189.
[3] Op. cit. p. 230.
[4] *Influence*, p. 70.

simple shelter of former days has given place to a splendid palace, where the father lives in princely magnificence. As the son approaches, he see the lord of the mansion, whom he little suspects to be his father, seated like a king on a throne surrounded by many attendants. Frightened by so much splendor, he turns aside and hastens off. But the father, recognizing his long lost son, sends after him. Unwilling to make himself known before the son has given proof of his fitness for a life of wealth and refinement, he engages him to labor in his fields at double wages. He lives in a rude hut, faithfully performing the menial tasks assigned him, till his merit becomes thoroughly tested. Then his father, inwardly rejoicing to find his son so worthy, but not yet ready to make himself known, raises him to a position of honor, and bids him feel as a son in the house of his father. In this condition he lives for many years, till at length the father, feeling his end approaching, summons the king and nobles, and declaring the astonished servant to be his own son, makes him heir of all his possessions.

Even if this story were of prechristian origin, it is too unlike that of the prodigal son, both in outline and in purpose, to deserve the name of a parallel. But there is not a fragment of evidence that the *Lotus of the True Law*, in which alone it is found, is as old as the gospel of *St. John*. Professor Seydel himself, while inclined to give the book as early a date as

possible, has to content himself with the vague estimate of "before 200 A.D."[1] There is a Chinese tradition[2] that the book was translated into Chinese at the close of the second century of the Christian era, but this testimony is contradicted by the *Chinese Catalogue of the Tri-pithaka*, which states that the oldest Chinese translation of the work was made by Chu-fa-hu, of the Western Tsin dynasty, A.D. 265–316.[3] From internal and external evidence, the most that can be reliably made out is that about 250 A.D. the work was in existence in its present form, and that chapters i.-xx. and xxvii., which constituted the work originally, are earlier still. But how much earlier, there is no positive ground for determining. Professor Kern thinks the original form may be some centuries earlier than 250 A.D., but this is pure conjecture.[4]

It is plain that a book which cannot be assigned with certainty to a date as early as 200 A.D. is not a legitimate source to draw from in trying to prove the dependence of the Gospels on Buddhist thought.

(10) In like manner, the authority of the *Lotus of the True Law* does not justify the use of the parallel which both Professor Seydel[5] and Mr. Lillie[6] find to

[1] Op. cit. p. 101.
[2] Edkins, *Chinese Buddhism*, p. 89.
[3] *S. B. E.* XXI. p. xx.
[4] Cf. *S. B. E.* XXI. p. xxii.
[5] Op. cit. p. 167.
[6] *Influence*, p 62. "In the *White Lotus of Dharma* (ch. xiv.), Buddha is asked how it is that, having sat under the Bo-tree only forty years ago, he has been able, according to his boast, to see many

the question put to Jesus by the doubting Pharisees: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?"

(11) The *Book of Parables* by Buddhaghosa is, as we have already seen, a Ceylonese work of the fifth century. Yet this is the authority on which Mr. Lillie[1] relies to attribute to Buddha himself the statement so like *Matthew*, v. 28, that the law to shun adultery "is broken by even looking at the wife of another with lustful mind."

(12) Here is another characteristic effusion from the same writer:[2] — "On one point, I have been a little puzzled. The pass-word of the Buddhist wanderers was Sadhu! which does not seem to correspond with the Pax Vobiscum! (*Mat.* x. 13) of Christ's disciples. But I have just come across a passage in Renan (*Les Apôtres*, p. 22) which shows that the Hebrew word was Shalom! (*bonheur!*) This is almost a literal translation of Sadhu!"

The value of this remarkable discovery would be greatly enhanced if we did not find this form of salutation in very ancient books of the Old Testament.[3]

(13) To this category of anachronisms belongs

Buddhas and saints who died hundreds of years previously. He answers that he has lived many hundred thousand myriads of Kotis, and that, though in the form of a Buddha, he is in reality Swayambhu, the Self-Existent, the Father of the million worlds."

[1] *Influence*, p. 51. [2] *Ibid.* p. 47.

[3] *Genesis*, xliii. 23. *Judges*, vi. 23; xix. 20, and elsewhere.

one which is, perhaps, the grossest of all, and which does not shield Mr. Lillie from the imputation of culpable ignorance because it has been committed by men whose reputation for scholarship is far greater than his own.[1] It is the attempt to prove, from certain mutual points of contact, the wholesale importation into Roman Catholicism of Lamaistic rites and customs.

One of the early champions of this thesis was Mr. Henry Prinsep,[2] who, drawing chiefly from the Abbé Huc's well-known book of travels, brought out, in 1851, a small volume entitled, *Tibet, Tartary, and Mongolia*. This book, which has but little scientific worth, is chiefly known to-day for its oft-quoted passage[3] enumerating the resemblances between Lamaism and Catholicism that Father Grueber, a Jesuit missionary of the seventeenth century, remarked in his journey through Tibet. This passage Mr. Lillie[4] does not fail to reproduce, nor does he forget the equally well-known testimony of the Abbé Huc.[5] Having thus shown by unimpeachable witnesses the many points in which the two religions agree, — the monastic system, with its obligations of poverty, chastity, and obedience, the tonsure, the fasts, the annual period of retreat and meditation, the venera-

[1] Cf. J. Fergusson, *Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 502.

[2] Not to be confounded with the eminent scholar, James Prinsep.

[3] Op. cit. p. 14. [4] *Influence*, pp. 174–175.

[5] *Travels in Tartary, Tibet, and China*, II. ch. 2. *Vide supra*, p. 150.

tion of saints and relics, the use of bells and rosaries, prayers and offerings for the dead, sacramental confession, baptism, offering of consecrated food on an altar, the use of holy water and incense, of crosier, mitre, dalmatic, cope, the processions, litanies, service with double choir, a graded hierarchy ruled by a supreme head, — he draws the conclusion that the Catholic Church, being less ancient than Buddhism, must have borrowed with full hands from its Tibetan neighbor.

In this remarkable piece of sophistry, Mr. Lillie seems to overlook the very important point that primitive Buddhism is one thing, and Lamaistic Buddhism is another. Far from being ancient, Lamaism, as has already been shown, took its rise only in the Middle Ages, having been developed by a slow process of modification from the Buddhism of Northern India, introduced into Tibet by Srong-tsan Sgam-po in the seventh century. Long before Lamaism had an existence, the resemblances enumerated above, with the single exception of the rosary, were prominent features, not only of the Latin church, but of the Greek and other Oriental churches as well. Of course, it cannot be denied that those points of contact in Lamaism which were derived from early Buddhism have an antiquity much greater than their Christian parallels. Such are the monastic system, the use of bells, rosaries, the veneration of saints, relics, and images, and pilgrimages to holy places. The

question whether these have any historical connection with the similar elements to be found in Catholicism is practically one with the larger question of the possible influence of Buddhism on Christianity. To this question Lamaism has nothing to say. As for the remaining resemblances, which were not derived from early Buddhism, and which are distinctively Lamaistic, the priority of Catholic rites and practices is too plainly taught by history to be made the subject of discussion. It is idle, therefore, to establish a comparison between Catholicism and Lamaism, as if the points of contact could be made to prejudice the claims of the Catholic Church.[1] Nor is there any call on the latter to demonstrate the way in which Lamaism came to possess these resemblances. Still, a very natural and plausible explanation is afforded by Nestorianism, which presents the same points of contact with the Buddhism of Tibet, and which is known to have exerted a widespread influence in Eastern Asia even as far as China itself, during the very period in which Lamaism was taking form.[2]

[1] Cf. K. F. Köppen, *Die Religion des Buddha*, I. pp. 561 ff. and II. p. 116. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 250. *Hibbert Lectures on Buddhism*, pp. 192–195.

[2] J. Fergusson (*Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 503), Max Müller (*New Review*, IV. p. 68), and Andrew White (*History of the Warfare of Science with Theology*, N. Y. 1896, II. p. 381), ascribe to the Abbé Huc the explanation that Lamaism was a cunning invention of Satan, devised to ape the true religion of God. Had they taken the pains to read his interesting chapter on this subject (*Travels*, II. ch. 2), they would not have committed this injustice to the genial and large-minded author.

(14) As a supplement to the last anachronism, and as a further instance of Mr. Lillie's method of arguing, observe what he says[1] of the Kwan-Yin liturgy, the existence of which cannot be traced beyond the beginning of the fifteenth century.

"This is what the Rev. S. Beal, a chaplain in the navy, wrote of a liturgy that he found in China: — 'The form of this office is a very curious one. It bears a singular likeness in its outline to the common type of the Eastern Christian liturgies. That is to say, there is an "Proanaphoral" and an "anaphoral" portion. There is a prayer of entrance, a prayer of incense, an inscription of praise to the threefold object, a prayer of oblation, the lections, the recitations of the Dharani, the Embolismus or prayer against temptation, followed by a "Confession" and a "Dismissal."' (*Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, p. 397)."

The following is the continuation of the subject, which Mr. Lillie found convenient to ignore: "The early arrival of the Nestorian Christians in China would be quite sufficient to account for this general resemblance, particularly if we recollect that the same emperor, Ta'e Tsung, who was the great patron of Buddhism, was also the protector of the new missionaries, who in consequence were able to build churches and establish themselves as a recog-

[1] *Influence*, p. 176.

nized body of religious worshippers in several parts of the empire."[1]

(15) The use of the cruciform swastika in the Christian catacombs is sometimes brought forward as evidence of the borrowing by early Christians of a Buddhist symbol.[2] But it is to be borne in mind that this ancient symbol, far from being distinctively Buddhist, was known to the peoples of Italy, Greece, and other parts of Europe long before Buddhism took form.[3]

[1] *Catena*, pp. 397–398. For the derivation of the Chinese female Kwan-Yin holding the child, from the Virgin Mother and Child. Cf. p. 412 of the same work.

[2] *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 213.

[3] Cf. A. Bertrand, *La religion des Gaulois*. Paris, 1897, pp. 143 ff. The value of this work is greatly diminished by its many ill-founded speculations. Cf. also Henry Schliemann, *Ilios, The City and Country of the Trojans*. N. Y., 1881, pp. 345 ff. Robert P. Gregg, *The Meaning and Origin of the Fylfot and Swastika. — Archæologia Britannica*, 1885, pp. 292 ff. Ludwig Müller, *L'emploi et la signification dans l'antiquité du signe dit crois gammé*. Copenhagen, 1877. Thos. Wilson, *The Swastika, the earliest known Symbol and its Migrations*. Washington, 1896. Goblet d'Alviella, *La migration des symboles*. Paris, 1891. Ch. ii. The latter is of the opinion that the swastika was introduced into India from Greece or Asia Minor about the fifth century B. C. There is good reason, however, to hold with Gregg, Müller, and others that it was a common inheritance of the Indo-European peoples from their Aryan ancestors. It seems originally to have been a sun-symbol.

CHAPTER IV

FICTIONS

Vain attempts to find a Buddhist parallel to the Holy Ghost — Maya not a virgin — Spurious parallels to the angelic announcements to Mary and to Joseph — The star in the East — Buddha not born on Christmas-day — Pretended counterparts to the offerings of the Magi — Bimbisara not the prototype of Herod — Habba not synonymous with Tathagata — Lack of resemblance between the story of the lost child Jesus and the Jambu-tree incident — Pretended baptism of Buddha — Untenableness of the statement that Buddha and Christ began to preach at the same age — The Bodhi-tree incident not the source of the story of Nathaniel and the fig-tree — The Gospel incident of the man born blind independent of the Buddhist notion of karma — Yasa not the prototype of Nicodemus — Lack of resemblance between Buddha's entry into Rajagriha and Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem — The Last Supper of Jesus wholly unlike the final meal of Buddha — Unwarranted ascription to Buddha of words spoken by Christ — Spurious Buddhist parallels to the abandonment of Jesus by His disciples, to the thief on the cross, to the parting of Christ's garments, to the resurrection, to *Matthew*, v. 29, and xiii. 45.

IN a comparison between Buddhism and Christianity, such as is made by the writers under review, one has a right to demand that none but genuine resemblances should be taken into account. It is plain that fancied parallels, or, in other words, fictions, should have no place in an argument that pretends

to rise above sophistry. That the writers in question have gravely compromised themselves in this respect, the following list of fictions will show.

(1) "Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Maya." Such is the heading which Mr. Bunsen[1] gives to a passage in which he tries to establish parallels in the Buddhist scriptures to the Gospel story of the miraculous conception and the virgin-birth of Jesus. In this objectionable use of texts from Christian ritual and Holy Scripture, he has been zealously imitated by both Professor Seydel and Mr. Lillie, in whose works almost every parallel, however far-fetched, is prefaced by a Gospel phrase or sentence.

It takes no little boldness to try to find in Buddhism what is recognized by all competent scholars to be an absolute contradiction to Buddhist teaching, namely, a genuine counterpart to the Christian idea of the Holy Spirit. Yet all three writers have attempted it with as many different results. According to Mr. Bunsen,[2] the Buddhist equivalent to the Holy Ghost is karma, though of this he seems not to be quite sure, for, in another place, he identifies the Holy Ghost with the spirit of the Bodhi-tree![3]

Professor Seydel[4] holds it to be Maitreya, the future Buddha of love, now reigning as a Bodhisattva in the Tusita heaven. But while applying to Gotama

[1] Op. cit. p. 33.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 26.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 42.
[4] Op. Cit. p. 263.

Buddha the phrase borrowed from Mr. Bunsen, "Conceived by the Holy Ghost," he shrewdly avoids the ridiculous, though consistent, conclusion that it was through the agency of Maitreya that Buddha's conception was effected.

Mr. Lillie [1] inclines to the view that the Buddhist Holy Spirit is the Dharma, the Law, which he discovers to be the very equivalent of the Greek Sophia.

On opinions like these no comment is needed.

In declaring that Buddha, like Christ, was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Mr. Bunsen is not disconcerted by the utter absence of testimony in the Sanskrit and Pali scriptures. His authority is a Chinese version, in which he made the remarkable discovery that "it was the Holy Spirit, or Shing-shin, which descended on the Virgin Maya." [2]

This method of resorting to foreign versions for parallels that have no existence in the original Buddhist scriptures is unfortunately too much in favor with all the writers under review. But in this instance, Mr. Bunsen has made the additional blunder of giving to the text a meaning which it plainly does not bear. The Chinese version from which he drew his fanciful notion is the one which Professor Beal has summarized in the Introduction to volume XIX. of the *Sacred Books of the East*. There, to be sure, p. xix, the word Shing-shin occurs; but, as the context clearly shows, it means nothing else than the

[1] *Influence*, p. 172. [2] Op. cit. p. 33.

pure spirit of Buddha himself, which entered the side of Maya in the form of an elephant.

(2) Equally unfounded is the assertion that Maya, like Mary, was at the same time a mother and a virgin.[1] Not, indeed, that the notion of virgin-motherhood is peculiar to the Sacred Scriptures alone. We find it elsewhere, in the Avesta, in the mythology of Greece and of ancient Mexico. But this notion has no place in the Buddha-legend, where Maya is not once spoken of as a virgin, and where the consummation of her marriage with King Suddhodana is plainly implied. Thus in the very version mentioned above, where Mr. Bunsen pretends to find the epithet virgin applied to Maya, we read:

"The queen from that moment [*i. e.* of conception] leads a pure, uncontaminate life.

"'Now, on account of this conception,
Bearing as I do a Mahasattva,
I give up all false, polluting ways,
And both in heart and body rest in purity.'"[2]

The *Romantic Legend*[3] represents Maya as saying: "From this time forth, I will no more partake of any sensual pleasure."

In the Life of Buddha, as told in the *Manual of Budhism*,[4] we read: "From the time of conception, Mahamaya was free from passion and lived in the strictest continence."

[1] Bunsen, Loc. cit. Seydel, Op. cit. p. 110. Lillie, *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 11.

[2] *S. B. E.* XIX. p. xix. [3] p. 37. [4] p. 142.

According to the Tibetan *Life of Buddha*, as given by Mr. Rockhill,[1] Suddhodana, the king, "knew Mahamaya his wife; but she bore him no children."

In the face of such evidence, the following astronomical reasoning of Mr. Lillie[2] fails to bring conviction: "It has been debated whether she was a virgin at the date of Buddha's birth. As she is, without doubt, Virgo of the sky, I think the question must be answered in the affirmative."

Nor does the plea which he makes in another work[3] serve to make good his contention. "Attempts have been recently made to prove that the mother of Buddha was not a virgin; but this goes completely counter to both the Northern and the Southern scriptures. It is stated in the *Lalita Vistara* that the mother of a Buddha must never have had a child. In the Southern scriptures, as given by Mr. Turnour, it is announced that a womb in which a Buddha elect has reposed, is like the sanctuary of a chaitya (temple)."

The evidence already cited shows his first statement to be untrue. The other two statements are beside the point. To be childless is not the same as to be a virgin; and a comparison given as a reason why Maya could not bear again, has nothing to say regarding her virginity.

[1] p. 15.

[2] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 70. This is an echo of Mr. Bunsen's symbolic speculation on p. 23 of his *Angel Messiah*.

[3] *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 11. Cf. *Influence*, p. 23.

"A womb in which a Buddho elect has reposed is as the sanctuary [in which the relic is enshrined] in a *chetiyo*. No human being can again occupy it or use it. On that account the mother of a Buddho elect, dying on the seventh day after the birth of the elect, is regenerated in *Tusitapura*." [1]

In another work still,[2] Mr. Lillie tries to prove the virginity of Maya from a passage in the *Lalita Vistara*. "By the consent of the king, the queen was permitted to lead the life of a virgin for thirty-two months." [3]

But the French translator, Mr. Foucaux, on whose version Mr. Lillie relies, commenting on this very text, denies that it implies virginity. He quotes a passage from the Tibetan version of the *Abhinish-kramana Sutra*, wherein the very opposite is plainly asserted. His words are as follows: "Maya Devi obtient du roi son époux de ne pas obéir au désir pendant 32 mois, mais il n'est pas dit qu'elle soit vierge. Le passage suivant de l'Abhinichkramana Sutra (trad. tib.) dans le Kandjour p. 189, ne laisse aucun doute à ce sujet. 'Le roi Souddhodana étant allé avec Mahamaya dans l'intérieur solitaire du palais, ils se livrèrent aux jeux, se livrèrent au plaisir, se livrèrent à la volupté.'" [4]

[1] Turnour, *Journ. Asiat. Soc. of Bengal*, VII. p. 800. Cf. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 45.

[2] *Influence*, p. 24. [3] Ch. iii., *Ann. Mus. Guim.* VI. p. 29.

[4] *Ann. Mus. Guim.* XIX. p. 12. Saint Jerome seems to have been the first to make the mistake of ascribing to Maya a virgin-motherhood. "Apud Gymnosophistas Indiæ, quasi per manus hujus opinionis auctoritas traditur quod Buddam principem dogmatis eorum e latere suo virgo generarit." *Adv. Jovinianum*, lib. I. c. 42.

(3) It needs a great reach of imagination to recognize with Mr. Lillie[1] an affinity between the angelic annunciation to Mary of her impending motherhood, and the dream of Maya that a white elephant had entered her right side. To resort to such a comparison seems like trifling with the good sense of the reader.

On the other hand, Professor Seydel[2] thinks he sees in the interpretation of Maya's dream by the Brahman priests the appropriate Buddhist parallel. Even this is too far-fetched to merit consideration.

(4) Despite Mr. Lillie's[3] assurance to the contrary, there is so little resemblance between the angel that appeared to Joseph in a dream to allay his suspicions, and the heavenly beings that, showing half their forms, anticipated Maya in announcing to the king the glorious conception of Buddha, that the parallelism must be unhesitatingly rejected. Were the resemblance a real one, instead of being purely fanciful, it would have to be rejected as an anachronism, since the earliest book in which it is found is the *Lalita Vistara*.

(5) The star which guided the wise men from the East to Bethlehem is not allowed to pass as an original feature of the Gospel narrative.[4] We are reminded that in the Buddha-legend there is mention

[1] *Influence*, p. 25. [2] Op. cit. p. 107.

[3] *Influence*, p. 25.

[4] Bunsen, Op. cit. p. 34. Seydel, Op. cit. p. 135. Lillie, *Influence*, p. 26.

of a star as well, Pushya (the Flower), at the time of whose conjunction Buddha was born.[1]

Mr. Lillie calls it the "king of stars," and tells us that "Colebrooke, the best astronomer of Oriental philologists, identifies this with the Delta of Cancer."[2]

But neither is Pushya the king of stars, nor is it identified even by Colebrooke with the insignificant star alleged. Colebrooke,[3] like all other competent scholars, recognizes Pushya to be, not a single star, but an asterism consisting of three stars in the constellation Cancer, the chief one being Delta. Pushya is one of the twenty-eight asterisms constituting the Hindu lunar zodiac, by which the different parts of the year are designated. The appearance of Pushya on the eastern horizon at the time of sunset was thus a regular annual phenomenon. It has not the remotest resemblance with the mysterious star mentioned in the Gospel as having gone before the wise men in their westward journey till it stopped over the place where Jesus was.

(6) Closely connected with this spurious parallel is the alleged coincidence of the birthday of Jesus with that of Buddha. Mr. Lillie,[4] who dwells at length on this point, informs us that "Mr. de Bunsen

[1] Professor Seydel allows himself to be led into Bunsen's error of assigning the appearance of Pushya to the time of Buddha's incarnation.

[2] *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 19.

[3] *Essays*, II. p. 293 (Cowell's edition). Cf. W. D. Whitney, *Oriental and Linguistic Studies*, Second Series, N. Y. 1874, p. 352.

[4] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 182..

was the first to discover that Buddha was born on the 25th of December." Invention, not discovery, is the proper term to apply to the curious and very erroneous result obtained, not from the consideration of the data given in the original sources, but from the combination of a Chinese translation of the sixth century with a Hindu New Year reckoning belonging to the Middle Ages.[1]

Both writers might have saved themselves many pages of worthless discussion, had they made use of the indications plainly set forth in the *Buddha Charita*, or the *Lalita Vistara*. In chapter vii. of the latter,[2] we read that the birth took place at the time of the conjunction of the asterism Pushya. That both Mr. Lillie and Mr. Bunsen should have ignored this, is not a little surprising, since they did not fail to make use of it to duplicate the Gospel incident of the star. The time of Buddha's birth was thus the time of conjunction of the full moon with the asterism Pushya, in other words, when the group of stars, Gamma, Delta, and Theta of Cancer were in opposition to the sun, and hence appearing on the eastern horizon at sunset.[3] This happens about the middle of January, not on Christmas day.

There is another indication that leads to the same result. Chapter vi. of the *Lalita Vistara* [4] opens

[1] Cf. Bunsen, Op. cit. p. 18. [2] *Ann. Mus. Guim.* VI. p. 74.
[3] Cf. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, VI. p. 432; VII. pp. 21, 68–69.
[4] *Ann. Mus. Guim.* VI. p. 54.

with the statement that Buddha's incarnation took place "in the month Vaisaka [April-May], when the asterism Visaka appeared." Mr. Lillie himself is familiar with this very passage, for only two pages before the place in his book where he gives December 25 as the birthday of Buddha, he writes: "So in spring, when appears the constellation Visakha [April-May], the Bodhisattva . . . entered the right side of his mother."[1] Now all the forms of the legend agree in assigning ten lunar months (nine solar months) to the period of gestation, so that Buddha's birth could not have taken place before the middle of January. This doubtless explains why this "discovery" of Mr. Bunsen has received no recognition in the scientific world.

(7) The attempt to find a parallel to the wise men offering to the infant Jesus gold, frankincense, and myrrh is no more successful. Professor Seydel,[2] under the caption "gold, frankincense, and myrrh," remarks that Buddha, not yet born, received from the god Brahman a dewdrop containing all power, and, immediately after birth, was presented by gods and nymphs with incense and spikenard, while later on, the Sakya princes bestowed on him splendid palaces

[1] *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 73. According to the Southern legend, it was at this time that Buddha was born. Cf. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. 63. Hardy, *Manual of Budhism*, p. 146.

[2] Op. cit. p. 139.

to live in. This is anything but a counterpart of the Gospel story.[1]

Mr. Lillie[2] is misleading, when he complacently says of this futile effort, "Seydel, in a chapter headed, 'Gold, frankincense, and myrrh,' draws attention to the similarity of the gift-presents in the Indian and Christian narratives." Not content, however, with this alleged parallel, he resorts to the story told in the ninth chapter of the *Lalita Vistara*, that the young Gotama was taken in great pomp to the royal garden and adorned with every imaginable ornament, — rings, bracelets, necklaces, ear-rings, and cinctures, of gold and precious stones, — but such was the splendor of his body that these ornaments seemed to have lost their brilliancy.[3]

It is plain that this story offers but a remote resemblance to the Gospel incident.

(8) In the story of King Bimbisara, which is first found in the *Romantic Legend*[4] belonging to the sixth century, Professor Seydel[5] and Mr. Lillie[6] think they see the prototype of the Gospel story of King Herod. Like Herod and a thousand others, Bimbisara was a king, ruling in the city of Rajagriha. Like

[1] The earliest authority for this bestowing of gifts at birth is the *Lalita Vistara*, which, as we have seen, is much more recent than the Gospels. It relates, that myriads of nymphs showered upon Maya flowers, perfumes, garlands, ointments, vestments, and ornaments. *Ann. Mus. Guim.* VI. p. 84.

[2] *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 30.

[3] Cf. also *Romantic Legend*, p. 64.

[4] pp. 103–104.

[5] Op. cit. pp. 142–143.

[6] *Influence*, p. 28.

many other monarchs, Herod included, he was not without fear that some rival might contest his supremacy. Unlike the case of Herod, there was no helpless infant in his kingdom whose death he sought to compass, lest one day it might prove a claimant to the throne. He was simply warned of the waxing strength of the neighboring prince, Gotama, who, grown to youthful vigor, was soon to take the reins of power and might show himself a formidable rival. He was advised to send an army at once into his neighbor's kingdom, and destroy him. But the king, who, unlike Herod, was a just man, indignantly rejected so wicked a proposal. Always on friendly terms with Gotama, he became a convert to the new religion.

It is only an overwrought fancy that could see a counterpart to the Gospel story in such a tale as this.

(9) Mr. Bunsen[1] sees in the appellation "habba," the "coming one," applied by the Jews to the expected Messiah, an echo of the common epithet of Buddha, Tathagata, to which he attaches the same meaning. Since there is not a single Sanskrit or Pali scholar who gives it this meaning, Mr. Bunsen's contention is valueless.[2]

(10) All three writers[3] point to the legend of Bud-

[1] Op. cit. p. 18.

[2] Tathagata is best rendered "the perfect one." Cf. Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 126.

[3] Bunsen, Op. cit. p. 30. — Seydel, Op. cit. p. 148. — Lillie, *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 25.

dha at the ploughing-match as the pattern after which the Gospel story of the lost child Jesus was modelled. The Buddhist story is found in two forms. According to the Pali form, Buddha, when an infant of five months, was put by his nurses in the shade of a Jambu-tree, while they withdrew to an adjoining field to witness the royal ploughing-match. So absorbed did they become in the contest that they forgot about their little charge, and when they returned some hours later, they found the babe sitting upright and motionless, in deep meditation, still shaded by the tree, though the shadows of all the other trees had turned. The king was summoned to witness the miracle, and fell in adoration before him.[1]

In the story as known to the Northern school, this episode is told of Buddha when a young man. The *Lalita Vistara*[2] puts the incident before his marriage; but according to the oldest versions,[3] it took place on the eve of his flight from home. Disgusted at the sight of suffering, which even the diversion of the ploughing-match could not keep from view, he quietly retired to a neighboring Jambu-tree, where he sat, with crossed legs, and lapsed into a meditative trance. Rishis, arrested in their flight, came to do him homage. The king missed him, and fearing some mishap, went out in search of him with attendants.

[1] Hardy, *Manual of Budhism*, p. 150. [2] Ch. xi.

[3] *Buddha Charita*, v. Cf. also *S. B. E.* XIX. pp. xx and 48. The *Buddha Charita* and its Chinese version make no mention of the Jambu-tree or of the Rishis.

He soon found him sitting motionless in the arrested shadow of the Jambu-tree.

It is plain that with the single exception of the search for the young prince, who, far from being lost, was well able to look after himself, this legend is quite unlike the story of the lost Jesus.

(11) We are gravely informed by each of the three writers[1] that as Jesus, on the eve of his public ministry, suffered himself to be baptized in the Jordan, so Buddha, on the eve of his enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree, sought baptism in the river Nairanjana. This is a curious instance of the wish being father to the thought; for the various versions of the legend simply state that before partaking of the rice and cream prepared for him by the shepherd's daughter, he went into the stream and bathed. There is good reason to believe that this was not the first time that Buddha subjected himself to this kind of baptism.[2]

(12) Mr. Lillie,[3] on the authority of Mr. Bunsen, tries to persuade his readers that Buddha, like Christ, began to preach at thirty years of age. But Mr. Bunsen's authority is here of no account, for it has not a single Buddhist text to give it support. Both the Sanskrit and the Pali scriptures agree in teaching

[1] Bunsen, Op. cit. p. 42. — Seydel, Op. cit. p. 155. — Lillie, *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, p. 155.

[2] Great stress is laid on the mystic significance of "crossing to the other shore" of the river on this occasion. But as this element is ignored, and even contradicted, by the ancient forms of the legend, it is fair to presume that its importance is set too high.

[3] *Influence*, p. 44.

that Buddha left his home at the age of twenty-nine years, and only after six years of asceticism attained to Buddhaship, and preached his first sermon at Benares.[1]

(13) One of the Gospel incidents which, in the mind of Professor Seydel,[2] point unmistakably to Buddhist influence, is the story in the first chapter of *John*, about Nathaniel and the fig-tree. As the new disciple came with Philip, Jesus said: "Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee," whereupon Nathaniel recognized Him as the Messiah. Here, then, observes Professor Seydel, we have the fig-tree mentioned in connection with Christ's messiahship and with the winning of two disciples. This association is so peculiar as to call for explanation. Now if we turn to the Buddha-legend, the mystery is solved. For Buddha attained to his enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree, which was a pippala, or variety of fig-tree. It was while sitting under the sacred fig-tree, immediately after his enlightenment, that he converted the two merchants, Tapussa and Bhallika. The winning of these first two converts under the Bodhi-tree supplies the key to the explanation of the similar incident which, in *John*, has such an awkward setting.

But is not fancy here taking the place of reason?

[1] Two Chinese versions give nineteen years as the age of Buddha when leaving home. Cf. *S. B. E.* XIX. pp. xxi, xxvi.

[2] Op. cit. pp. 168–170, also, 296.

Analyze the alleged parallel closely, and it quickly resolves itself into a series, not of resemblances, but of contrasts. The sacred fig-tree is associated with the Buddhaship, for beneath it Buddha attained to perfect wisdom. Buddha, according to the inaccurate statement of Professor Seydel, while still sitting beneath the tree, makes his first two converts, merchants, who, being won over to the new law, go on their way rejoicing. They are not numbered among his intimate disciples. On the other hand, Philip and Nathaniel are not the first to be won over to Christ. Peter and John preceded them. They did not merely believe in Christ; they joined themselves to the small band of His familiar disciples. Christ did not, after the alleged example of Buddha, win them over while sitting under the fig-tree; nor is any close connection of the fig-tree with His messiahship implied. He led Nathaniel to recognize Him to be the Messiah by giving proof of His superhuman knowledge. He declared that when Nathaniel was under the fig-tree, He knew him. Thus the only thing in the two incidents that offers a basis for comparison is the fig-tree. But as fig-trees were common enough in Palestine, it is hardly necessary to go to India to find the explanation of this trivial coincidence.

(14) Another story thought by Professor Seydel[1] and Mr. Lillie[2] to bear the unmistakable impress of

[1] Op. cit. pp. 230-231.

[2] *Influence*, pp. 54-55.

Buddhist speculation is that mentioned in *John*, ix. 1–4, concerning the man born blind. The question put to Jesus by His disciples, "Who did sin, this man or his parents?" is made to bear witness that the disciples were imbued with Buddhist ideas of rebirth, with the evil consequences of sin committed in a previous life. Professor Seydel, in confirmation, calls attention to a parable in the *Lotus of the True Law*, in which a physician cures a blind man, declaring beforehand that his infirmity was the result of a previous life of sin.

The fictitious character of this alleged resemblance reveals itself on a moment's reflection. First of all, the fact that the doctrine of rebirth was not unknown in Palestine in the time of Christ, while betraying foreign influence, would not necessarily point to a Buddhist source; for the doctrine was known to the Greeks, as well, as far back as Pythagoras.[1]

In the second place, granted that this notion was in the air, the question, "Did this man sin or his parents?" need not imply that the speaker held the doctrine of metempsychosis himself. The knowledge that some held it, and the suspicion that it might be true, would be enough to account for the question.

[1] Mr. Lillie, following Mr. Bunsen, makes the gratuitous assertion that Pythagoras borrowed his particular views from Buddha. Scholars think otherwise. "The story of Pythagoras' journey to India is taken by modern critics to be a fable. Sound scholarship recognizes the independent origin of Greek and Indian philosophy." Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde*, I. p. 862.

Thirdly, it is incredible that the disciples would have held the Buddhist doctrine of karma without the positive approbation of Jesus. But how absolutely foreign to His mind was any such notion, is plainly shown by His reply: "Neither did this man sin nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." It is difficult to conceive a more absolute denial of the doctrine of karma than this.

Professor Seydel's appeal to the parable of the blind man in the *Lotus of the True Law* is of no avail, for the *Gospel of St. John* antedates this work by at least a century.

(15) In the *Mahavagga*,[1] the story is told of the young nobleman Yasa, who abandoned his home to become a monk. It is identical with the story of Buddha's flight from home, and seems to be the original and not the copy. Yasa had three palaces, one for each season, in which he lived a life of careless pleasure, surrounded by female musicians. One night he awoke, and by the light of the lamp, saw his female attendants lying asleep in all sorts of hideous positions. Disgusted at the sight, he put on his gilt slippers, and fled. A mysterious hand opened the door of his palace and the gate of the city, so that he was able to make his way without hindrance to the deer-park. There, in the gray light of the morning, he came upon Buddha walking up and down

[1] i. 7.—*S. B. E.* XIII. p. 102.

in the open air. He unburdened himself to him, listened to his exhortations, and became a disciple.

This is the character that Mr. Lillie [1] would have us take as the prototype of Nicodemus. "Professor Rhys Davids points out that Yasas, a rich young man, came to Buddha by night for fear of his rich relations." On comparisons like these no comment is needed.

(16) "Buddha's triumphal entry into Rajagriha," says Mr. Lillie,[2] "has been compared to Christ's entry into Jerusalem." The merit of originating this comparison seems to belong to Professor Seydel.[3] But apart from the fact that the story is not found in the most ancient forms of the Buddha-legend, and is entirely unknown to the Northern school, the points of resemblance are too few to warrant the name of a parallel. Buddha, accepting an invitation to dine with Bimbisara, king of Rajagriha, sets out in the morning with his band of monks. As he enters the city, a deva, assuming the form of a beautiful youth, precedes Buddha, and announces in song to the inhabitants that the most perfect of kings, exempt from all passions, free from the miseries of rebirth, worthy of the homage of gods and men, is coming. Of anything like an enthusiastic greeting on the part of the people, of a strewing of branches or flowers before him, there is not a word.[4] The parallel is reduced to

[1] *Influence*, p. 47.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 53.
[3] Op. cit. p. 255.
[4] Bigandet, Op. cit. pp. 154-155.

the single common feature of entering into a city. In other words, it is no parallel at all.

(17) Mr. Lillie[1] lays himself open to severe criticism in his attempt to draw a parallelism between the Last Supper of Jesus and the final meal prepared for Buddha by Chunda, the smith. His designation of this meal as a "last supper" is singularly inappropriate; for Buddha was not wont to sup at all, being obliged by his rule of life to eat but once a day, and that before noon.[2] But what he says of this meal is more objectionable still: "A treacherous disciple changed his alms-bowl, and apparently he was poisoned. . . . It will be remembered that during the last supper of Jesus a treacherous disciple 'dipped into his dish,' but as Jesus was not poisoned, the event had no sequence."

This comparison would be of little weight, even if both sides were correctly stated. But the fact is that the Buddhist episode, besides being of tardy origin,[3] is strangely misrepresented. In the Tibetan source from which he pretends to have drawn it, there is mention, not of a treacherous disciple, but of a wicked one. Nor is it related that this wicked disciple changed his master's dish and poisoned him, but simply that, in his greed, he took for himself the superior food which was meant for Buddha, so that

[1] *Influence*, p. 65. *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 193.

[2] The *Book of the Great Decease* states that the meal in question took place early in the morning. *Vide supra*, p. 77.

[3] It is not to be found in the *Book of the Great Decease*.

the host was obliged to have another bowl of equally choice contents prepared for his distinguished guest.[1]

Such are the elements out of which Mr. Lillie seeks to build up the Buddhist model of the Last Supper!

(18) The following statement of Mr. Bunsen[2] is an absolute fiction, for which there is not a shred of evidence in Buddhist records: "Gautama Buddha is said to have announced to his disciples that the time of his departure had come. 'Arise, let us go hence, my time is come.' Turning towards the east, and with folded hands, he prayed to the highest Spirit, who inhabits the region of purest light, to Maha-Brahma."

It is easy to recognize in these words the influence of the author of the *Light of Asia*. To make the personages of the Buddha-legend speak the language of scripture is questionable even in a poet. But it is absolutely inexcusable in one who pretends to write as a man of science.

(19) The inanity of the following comparison is too patent to call for discussion. "'Then all His disciples forsook Him and fled.' It is recorded that on one occasion, when a 'must' elephant charged furiously, 'all the disciples deserted Buddha. Ananda alone remained.'"[3]

(20) Fit to be classed with the preceding is the Buddhist parallel proposed to the conversion of the

[1] Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 133.
[2] Op. cit. p. 48.
[3] *Influence*, p. 58.

thief on the cross. Referring to the Chinese *Dhammapada*, Mr. Lillie [1] gravely informs us that "Buddha confronts a terrible bandit in his mountain retreat, and converts him."

(21) Scarcely less trivial is the Buddhist parallel to the parting of Christ's garments. "The Abbé Huc tells us that on the death of the Bokte Lama, his garments are cut into little strips and prized immensely." [2]

(22) The resurrection of the body forms no part of Buddhist belief. Yet, nothing daunted, Mr. Lillie [3] finds a Buddhist parallel to the Gospel narrative that after the death of Christ on the cross, the bodies of the saints that slept arose. Referring to the Tibetan Buddha-legend, he says, "When Buddha died at Kusinagara, Ananda and another disciple saw many denizens of the unseen world in the city, by the river Yigdan."

(23) So, too, the resurrection of Christ and His appearing to many, are not without their alleged Buddhist prototype; for a Chinese version, which Mr. Lillie [4] forgets to say is centuries later than the Gospel narrative, tells how the dead Buddha, to soothe his mother, who had come down weeping from the sky, opened the lid of his coffin and appeared to her!

[1] *Influence*, p. 61. [2] Lillie, Op. cit. p. 67.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 66. This incident is not to be found in the *Book of the Great Decease.*

[4] *Influence*, p. 67. *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 196.

(24) To show the source of the saying of Christ, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out," the same writer [1] gives a story from the *Ocean of Worlds*, which he neglects to say does not belong to the canonical Buddhist scriptures: "A young monk meets a rich woman who pities his hard lot. 'Blessed is the woman who looks into thy lovely eyes.' 'Lovely,' replied the monk, 'look here!' And plucking out one of his eyes, he held it up, bleeding and ghastly, and asked her to correct her opinion."

As the principle on which the monk acted may be formulated, "If thy eye cause others to stumble, pluck it out," it would have been better had Mr. Lillie sought elsewhere for his term of comparison.

(25) The well-known similitude of the kingdom of heaven to the pearl of great price, to obtain which the merchant sells all his store, is compared not with a similitude, as one would naturally expect, but with a story that Buddha, when a merchant in a former birth, dropped a very precious gem into the sea, and, through perseverance and determination, recovered it! [2]

These are the many fictions which in the works under review are set forth as witnesses against the originality of Christianity. Taken together with the exaggerations and the anachronisms already enumerated, they constitute the great majority of the

[1] *Influence*, p. 59. [2] *Ibid.* p. 61.

alleged parallels that are pressed into service to do honor to Buddhism to the prejudice of the Christian religion. Whether the small remnant of genuine resemblances throws doubt on the originality of the Gospels will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

RESEMBLANCES NOT IMPLYING DEPENDENCE

Abuse of the principle that resemblance means dependence — Resemblances often of independent origin — Examples from comparative ethnology and religion — Explained by similarity of conditions and by the uniformity of the laws of thought — Further instances — Enumeration of the Buddhist parallels wrongly taken to indicate the influence of Buddhism on Christianity.

IT is a mistake frequently committed in the comparison of different religious systems to make too large a use of the principle that resemblance means dependence. No principle is more liable to abuse; consequently, none should be applied with greater care. For both experience and reflection give warning that in the customs and sayings of different peoples, there are many resemblances of quite independent origin. So common, in fact, are such resemblances that a careful scholar will be slow to suspect an historical connection except in very special instances.

Nothing is more common in the study of comparative ethnology and religion than to find similar social and religious customs practised by peoples too remote to have had any communication, the one with

the other. Take, for example, the uncleanness of the mother at childbirth, or the use of ordeals, or the custom of burying with the dead the utensils needed for the next life, or the belief in witchcraft, or in the reincarnation of the souls of the dead in human and animal forms, — these and many other observances are the possession of peoples native to every continent of the earth, peoples absolutely unknown to one another, and representing almost every degree of social and religious progress. Even a custom so singular as the couvade has been found to prevail among tribes of California, New Mexico, Brazil, Western China, Southern Asia, among the Tibareni of the Black Sea, and the Basques of Northern Spain.

It needs but a little reflection to understand how these and a hundred other resemblances take their rise.

All the world over, men have to a large extent the same daily experiences, the same feelings, the same desires. Now, as the laws of human thought are everywhere the same, it lies in the very nature of things that men, in so far as they have the same experiences, will think the same thoughts, and give expression to them in sayings and customs that strike the unreflecting observer by their similarity.

It is particularly in the sphere of moral conduct that resemblances of independent origin may be looked for. Where different and even remote peoples

stand on an equal grade of culture, man's duties to his family, his friends, his tribes-men, are recognized by all with about the same degree of perspicuity. The excellence of a life of virtue, such as it is conceived, is held in equal esteem. Hence it is that the proverbs of such peoples, while of quite independent origin, offer many points of contact.

The forms of speech, too, in which these thoughts find expression, are often very much alike. Since the use of figurative language is universal, it is not in the least surprising that the same phenomena of daily experience should furnish the orator in every land with the figures that lend vividness to his utterance, nor is it at all strange that religious teachers of different nations should give point to their teachings by similar parables drawn from familiar examples of human activity.

When Isaias,[1] speaking in the name of Jehovah, says of Cyrus: "He is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure," or when Ezekiel,[2] exercising a similar office, says of David: "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them and shall be their shepherd," no one thinks of questioning the originality of the figure on the ground that in the poems of Homer the favorite epithet applied to Agamemnon is "shepherd of the people."[3]

[1] *Isaias*, xliv. 28.
[2] *Ezekiel*, xxxiv. 23.
[3] *Odyssey*, iii. 155.

Neither is there any cause to suspect an affinity between the house-simile uttered by Buddha under the Bodhi-tree, and the beautiful soliloquy of Philolaches,[1] in which he likens himself to a mansion that is in sad need of repair. Nor does the Buddha-epithet, Sakya-sinha, Sakya-lion, imply any acquaintance on the part of Buddhists with the similar epithet given centuries before to Juda. "Juda is a lion's whelp . . . he couched as a lion."[2] Nor is it necessary to have recourse to the second chapter of *Genesis* to account for the Buddhist conception of the Bodhi-tree. Nor need we see in the verse of the song of David given in *II. Kings*, xxii. 28, "For Thou art my lamp, O Lord," the source of the Buddhist saying, "Be ye lamps unto yourselves," or of the similar figure used by an Aztec mother in instructing her daughter: "It will be to you as a lamp and a beacon so long as you shall live in this world."[3]

These reflections serve to show how idle is the attempt on the part of the writers under review to make capital of certain Buddhist parallels that offer an undoubted resemblance to utterances found in the Gospels.

We are all familiar with the beautiful incident told in the Gospel, that as Jesus was one day preaching to a throng of listeners, a woman cried out in her

[1] Plautus, *Mostellaria*, act. i. scen. 2. [2] *Gen.* xlix. 8.

[3] Sahagun, *Historia de Nueva España*, VI. cap. xix. The passage is translated by Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*, Vol. II. Appendix, part ii. no. 1.

enthusiasm, "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee and the breasts that gave Thee suck," whereupon our Saviour made reply, "Yea, rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it."[1]

To this Professor Seydel[2] offers what he thinks a most significant parallel, of which the Gospel incident is an unmistakable reflection. The Buddha-legend tells how a princess, looking down from her apartments on Gotama as he passed by, paling the splendor of his retinue by his personal magnificence, was carried away by the sight and cried out: "Happy the father and mother who have such an incomparable son! Happy the wife who has so excellent a lord!" But Gotama, seeing that real happiness was to be found only in Nirvana, made up his mind to renounce the world that very night; and in return for the great truth which the words of the princess had brought home to him, he loosed a string of costly pearls from his neck and sent it to her.[3]

In this story, there is but one feature which admits of comparison with the Gospel incident, namely, the words of felicitation which the princess had for the mother who gave birth to Gotama. But is this saying so remarkable that Professor Seydel should deny

[1] *Luke*, xi. 27, 28.

[2] *Die Buddha-Legende und das Leben Jesu*, p. 20.

[3] Cf. *Legend of Gaudama*, I. p. 58; *Buddha Charita*, v. 24. In the original, there is a play on the words "happiness" and "Nirvana," which sound much alike.

to the Gospel parallel the merit of originality? Is it not a common experience that parents take delight in a worthy son? Does not the *Book of Proverbs* say that a wise son maketh a glad father? Surely, then, to call a mother happy for possessing a remarkable son is to give utterance to a truism. It is to say what has doubtless been said ten thousand times in every language. A saying so common would not have had a place either in the Gospel narrative or in the Buddha-legend, had it not in both cases given occasion for a response of much deeper import.

Every religious teacher recognizes certain ideals, and certain states which it is a blessed thing for the individual to possess. Hence it is but natural that in the traditional teachings of different religions, a number of beatitudes should be found. The psalms abound in them. There is thus no reason for resorting, as Mr. Lillie does,[1] to the following Buddhist text to explain the presence in the *Sermon on the Mount* of the eight incomparable beatitudes.

"Many angels and men
Have held various things blessings,
When they were yearning for the inner wisdom.
Do thou declare to us the chief good.

"Not to serve the foolish,
But to serve the spiritual;
To honor those worthy of honor, —
This is the greatest blessing.

[1] *Influence*, pp. 48–49.

"To dwell in a spot that befits one's condition,
To think of the effect of one's deeds,
To guide the behavior aright, —
This is the greatest blessing.

"Much insight and education,
Self-control and pleasant speech,
And whatever word be well spoken, —
This is the greatest blessing.

"To support father and mother,
To cherish wife and child,
To *follow a peaceful calling*, —
This is the greatest blessing.

"To *bestow alms* and *live righteously*,
To give help to kindred,
Deeds which cannot be blamed, —
This is the greatest blessing.

"To *abhor and cease from sin*,
Abstinence from strong drink,
Not to be weary in well-doing, —
This is the greatest blessing.

"*Reverence* and lowliness,
Contentment and gratitude,
The hearing of Dharma at due seasons,
This is the greatest blessing.

"To be *long-suffering* and *meek*,
To associate with the tranquil,
Religious talk at due seasons, —
This is the greatest blessing.

"*Self-restraint* and *purity*,
The knowledge of noble truths,
The attainment of Nirvana, —
This is the greatest blessing."

From the *Sutra of the Forty-two Sections*, an early Chinese compilation of Buddhist teachings, Mr. Lillie [1] gives the following quotations: —

"By love alone can we conquer wrath. By good alone can we conquer evil. The whole world dreads violence. All men tremble in the presence of death. Do to others that which ye would have them do to you. Kill not. Cause no death." "Say no harsh words to thy neighbor. He will reply to thee in the same tone."

These Buddhist texts are not needed to account for the similar teaching of Christ to love our enemies and to return good for evil. From Mr. Lillie's point of view, consistency would demand that he seek the origin of the Buddhist texts themselves in the earlier teaching of the *Book of Proverbs*: —

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but a harsh word stirreth up anger." "If thine enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; then shalt thou heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee." [2]

Figurative language, based on the familiar occupation of husbandry, is not so remarkable that the Gospel parable of the sower should be traced to the following text: [3] —

[1] Op. cit. p. 48.
[2] *Proverbs*, xv. 1; xxv. 21, 22.
[3] *Influence*, p. 51.

"It is recorded that Buddha once stood beside the ploughman Kasibharadyaja, who reproved him for his idleness. Buddha replied thus, 'I, too, plough and sow, and from my ploughing and sowing I reap immortal fruit. My field is religion. The weeds that I pluck up are the passions of cleaving to this life. My plough is wisdom, my seed purity.'"

The same judgment holds good of the following texts, that are not without their corresponding analogies in the writings of the New Testament: —

"As men sow, thus shall they reap." [1]

"A man," says Buddha, "buries a treasure in a deep pit, which lying concealed therein day after day, profits him nothing; but there is a treasure of charity, piety, temperance, soberness, a treasure secure, impregnable, that cannot pass away, a treasure that no thief can steal. Let the wise man practise Dharma. This is a treasure that follows him after death." (*Khuddaka Patha*, p. 13.) [2]

"As when a string of blind men are clinging one to the other, neither can the foremost see, nor the middle one see, nor the hindmost see. Just so, methinks, Vasittha, is the talk of the Brahmans versed in the three Vedas." (*Tevijja Sutta*, i. 15.) [3]

"What is the use of platted hair, O fool! What of a garment of skins! Your low yearnings are within you, and the outside thou makest clean!" (*Dhammapada*, 394.)

These are the most prominent resemblances that are to be found between the religious teachings of Christ and those ascribed to Buddha. In not a single

[1] *Influence*, p. 52.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.* p. 56.

instance is an historical connection probable. They have their fitting explanation in the principle that the human mind, working in similar circumstances, will give birth to similar thoughts.

Lastly, we may note that the similarity of the life-work in which Jesus and Buddha were engaged has given rise to a certain number of parallels which cannot, however, be pressed into the argument without committing a flagrant violation of historic truth. In each case, the religion was propagated by preaching. Buddha, like Christ, gathered disciples about him, and having instructed them in his doctrines, sent them forth to convert their fellow-men. We read that when the disciples were sixty-one in number, Buddha said to them: —

"Go ye, now, O Bhikkhus, and wander for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain and for the welfare of gods and men. Let not two of you go the same way." [1]

As the Gospel speaks of John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, so, too, do we hear tell of Ananda, the favorite disciple of Buddha. Nor is there wanting a counterpart of Judas, — Devadatta, who tried to foil Buddha's plans, and even made several ineffectual attempts on his life.

Another similarity between Buddhism and Christianity is that both religions failed to maintain a flour-

[1] *Mahavagga*, i. 11. *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 112.

ishing existence in the land that saw them rise. They languished at home, but found a vigorous life and exercised a widespread influence abroad.

It is needless to say that resemblances like these, being mere coincidences, give no evidence of the dependence of the one religion upon the other.

CHAPTER VI

ARGUMENTS FOR THE INDEPENDENT ORIGIN OF THE GOSPELS

The apostolic origin of the *Gospels of Matthew* and of *Luke* incompatible with the adoption of mythical elements, and especially of features of the Buddha-legend — The alleged presence of Buddhist lore in Palestine and Greece an unwarranted assumption — The second Girnar Edict not an indication of Buddhist activity in the western possessions of Antiochus — The meaning of Yavana (Yona), and of Yavana(Yona)-loka — The thirteenth edict not conclusive evidence of the existence of Buddhism in the Greek-speaking world — The latter disproved by the silence of Greek literature and the total absence of Buddhist remains — Inconsistent also with the silence of the Buddhist chronicles — Alasadda, capital of the Yona country, not Alexandria of Egypt — Zarmanochegas not a Buddhist.

WE have already seen how the vast array of pretended borrowings on the part of Christianity from Buddhist sources dwindles on close examination to a few resemblances which, for the greater part, are easily explained on the ground of independent origin. The theory that Christianity is little more than a recasting of Buddhist elements into a new form thus falls to the ground for lack of sufficient coherent material. For the purpose of refutation further arguments are superfluous; but

completeness of view demands that a few more considerations be dealt with that are quite pertinent to the subject. While the points of agreement in the two religions have been shown not to be so remarkable as to create a likelihood that the one has borrowed from the other, there are on the other hand, several reasons that tell with great force against the probability of an infiltration of Buddhist lore into the Gospels.

First of all, it should be borne in mind that the Gospels took form so soon after the death of Christ as to render any application to Him of Buddha fables morally impossible.

Christ was not a figure that loomed up suddenly before the people out of the mist of an unknown past. For three long years He had lived on terms of closest familiarity with His apostles and some of His disciples. His character was vividly impressed on their minds. Every saying and act of importance was carefully noted. Nor were the striking incidents of His childhood likely to remain unknown; for among the followers who cherished His memory were His own mother and His so-called brothers and sisters.

After His death, His acts and words were carefully treasured up in the minds of those who knew Him best. The preaching of the apostles and disciples consisted largely of these *memorabilia* of their beloved Master. And so from the very first years of the Christian Church, there existed a large unwritten

collection of sayings and doings of Christ that were preserved with jealous care, being constantly employed in the sacred office of making Christ crucified known to men.

Now so long as Christ's mother and His disciples were alive, legendary fancies could never have come by mistake to form part of the authoritative teaching concerning the person and work of our blessed Savior. Had the story of the Magi, for example, or that of Simeon been a fable, it would have been denied without a moment's hesitation by Mary. In like manner, the apostles would have been the first to reject any spurious accretions to the story of Christ's public life, with which they were so familiar. Only by fraudulent design could myths and legends have found their way into the apostolic memoirs of Christ. But this hypothesis is utterly excluded by the unquestionable sincerity of the apostles, who gave up all that the world holds dear, even life itself, in testimony of the truth of what they preached.

Now if this be true of the oral preaching of the apostles, it is true as well of the *Gospels of Matthew* and *Luke*, in which the narratives of Christ's earliest years are to be found. We need not enter into the question whether the *Gospel of Matthew* was really written by the apostle with whose name it is linked. It is enough for our purpose to bear in mind that both these documents represent the authoritative teaching of the apostles, having been composed

while many of the apostles and disciples were still alive. Most biblical scholars are now agreed in assigning to these Gospels a date ranging from 70 to 85 A. D. Even so sceptical a critic as Renan holds the *Gospel of Luke* to be as early as 70–80 A. D. It stands to reason then, that both these Gospels, being composed under the eyes of those who knew Christ personally, and having the approbation of the apostles so as to be reckoned among the inspired scriptures, could not have been embellished with fanciful tales that formed no part of the personal experience of Jesus.

But if fabulous elements in general could not have crept into the Gospel narrative, least of all could stories from the Buddha-legend have become part of apostolic teaching concerning the life of Jesus. Let us grant, for argument's sake, that the legendary account of Buddha's life was current in Palestine in the time of Christ. How are we to imagine for a moment that myths so closely associated with the name of Buddha could have been incorporated unwittingly into the biography of Christ? The very publicity of the Buddha-legend would have rendered such a confusion impossible. Even a fraudulent attempt to make Christ the hero of the Buddha-tales would have proved a disastrous failure; for so flagrant an imposture would not have escaped the notice of those who set themselves in bitter opposition to the new religion. They would not have failed

to make use of it as a most effective weapon for assailing the claim of Christianity to divine origin. And yet in the attacks of Marcion, Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, there is not the shadow of a charge that the Christian religion was guilty of arraying itself in the borrowed finery of Buddhism.

But this is not all. The argument under review is burdened with a still greater difficulty; for its chief premise, that Buddhist lore was current in Palestine in the time of Christ, lacks positive evidence and must be set down as a gratuitous assumption.

We have already seen how idle it is to try to make out that the Essenes were Buddhists and hence purveyors of Buddhist traditions. That they were acquainted with such traditions, there is not a single respectable proof. Nor do the rabbinical schools betray any familiarity with Buddhist lore. In the whole range of Palestinian literature the name of Buddha does not once occur. Of the Buddha-legend there is not a trace.

Great emphasis is laid on the possibility of Buddhism having made its way to Syria and Egypt over the great trade-routes that connected India with the civilization of the West from early times. This possibility cannot be questioned. But it counts for little unless it can be shown to have been realized. India was also connected by trade-routes with Tibet and Siam, so that here, as well, was a possibility for Buddhism to extend its influence long before the Chris-

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established superintendents of religion to promote the practice of virtue by men of every sect.

"Among the Yavanas, the Kambojas, the Gandharas . . . and the other peoples on the frontier, they look after the Brahmans and the rich, the poor, and the aged, with a view to their welfare and happiness." [1]

Now these Yavanas, of which the edict makes mention, were without doubt subjects of Antiochus. Yavana, or Yona, is the Indian word for Ionian, that is, Greek. While the term came to designate any foreigner from the West, it was most commonly used to call to mind the Greek-speaking settlers in Bactria, Parthia, and the adjoining regions bordering on India.[2]

That these Greeks of the extreme East were the Yavanas referred to in the edict is plain from the fact that they were classed, like the Gandharas, with the people on the frontier. There is little doubt that the contents of the other edict have reference likewise to these remote subjects of King Antiochus. Thus, far from indicating the presence of Buddhism in the Greek world of the West, the edict simply testifies to the observance in Asoka's day of Buddhist practices of benevolence in the Kabul valley and adjacent regions.

[1] Tr. from Senart, *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, I. p. 143.

[2] Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde*, I. p. 861. G. Bühler, *S. B. E.* II. p. lvi. Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples of India*, pp. 17 and 59. Cf. *Questions of King Milinda*, *S. B. E.* XXXV. pp. 2 and 6.

Mr. Lillie tries to find additional support to his interpretation of the edict in the well-known passage in the twelfth chapter of the *Mahavansa*, which tells of the propagation of Buddhism abroad under the auspices of Asoka. According to this chronicle:

1. Majjhantika evangelized Kashmir and Gandhara, winning 100,000 converts.
2. Mahadeva evangelized Mahisa, winning 80,000 converts.
3. Rakkhita evangelized Vanavasi, winning 60,000 converts.
4. Yona Dhammarakkhita evangelized Aparantaka, winning 70,000 converts.
5. Maha Dhammarakkhita evangelized Maharattha, winning 97,000 converts.
6. Maha Rakkhita evangelized Yonaloka, winning 187,000 converts.
7. Majjhima evangelized Himavanta.
8. Sena and Uttara evangelized Savanna-bhumi.
9. Mahinda and four others evangelized Lanka (Ceylon).[1]

Referring to the sixth missionary enterprise in this list, Mr. Lillie, with the absolute assurance of one who is repeating a well established fact of history, asserts that Asoka's missionary Maha Rakkhita introduced Buddhism into Greece. His statement is entirely misleading. According to the text, the place evangelized was Yonaloka, that is, the region of the Yonas or Yavanas. But, as we have just seen, the word Yonas meant, for the people of India, not so much the natives of Greece, as the Greek-speaking inhabitants of the Bactrian region, with whom they

[1] G. Turnour, *Mahawanso*, p. 71.

were brought into frequent contact. That it is to these Bactrian Greeks and not to the people of Greece that the word Yonaloka here applies, all competent scholars are agreed. Among these may be cited Lassen,[1] Burnouf,[2] Cunningham,[3] Fergusson,[4] Rhys Davids,[5] and E. Hardy.[6]

In the face of such overwhelming authority, it is the height of rashness for Mr. Lillie to appeal to this text of the *Mahavansa* in proof of his assertion that the religion of Buddha was made known to the people of Greece. Moreover, his interpretation commits him to the paradox that 187,000 converts to Buddhism were made in Greece at the close of the third century without exciting a single note of comment in their contemporaries, and without leaving a trace of their belief in the literary or architectural monuments of their native land.

The chief inscription of Asoka which is thought to bear witness to the existence of the Buddhist religion in the Greek-speaking nations of the West is the famous thirteenth edict of Girnar. The translation which Mr. Lillie uses is that of James Prinsep. But this version, being based solely on the mutilated Girnar text, is defective in the very part where accu-

[1] *Indische Alterthumskunde*, II. p. 244.

[2] *Introduction à l'Histoire du Bouddhism Indien*, p. 628.

[3] *Bhilsa Topes*, p. 118. Cf. also *Archæological Survey of India*, I. p. xxxv.

[4] *Cave Temples of India*, p. 17.

[5] *Buddhism*, p. 227.

[6] *Buddhismus*, p. 112.

racy is most needed.[1] It was not till long after his death that the duplicates of this edict were discovered at Khalsi and Kapur di Giri which enabled scholars to make good the defects of the Girnar inscription. This has been admirably done by Senart, and it is from his French version that the following passage from the edict is translated.

"In truth, the king, dear to the gods, has at heart security for all creatures, respect for life, peace, and happiness. These are the things that the king, dear to the gods, takes to be the conquests of religion. It is in these religious conquests that the king, dear to the gods, finds delight both in his own empire and over all the border lands for the distance of many hundred yojanas.[2] Among these [neighbors are] Antiochus, the king of the Yavanas, and beyond this same Antiochus four kings, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas, and Alexander; in the South, the Codas, Pamdyas as far as Ceylon, and so, too, the king of the Huns [?] Vismavasi [?]. Among the Yavanas and Kambojas, the Nabhakas and Nabhapamtis, the Bhojas and Pentenikas, the Andhras and Pulindas, everywhere the religious instructions of the king, dear to the gods, are observed. Wherever the embassies of the king, dear to the gods, have been sent, there, too, the duties of religion having been made known in the name of the king, dear to the gods, men now give heed and will give heed to the religious instructions, to religion, this bulwark against. . . . In this

[1] "And the Greek King, besides, by whom the four Greek Kings, Ptolemaios and Gongakenos and Magas . . . (have been induced to permit that) . . . both here and in foreign countries everywhere (the people) follow the doctrine of the religion of Devanampiya whereso-ever it reacheth." — *Journ. As. Soc. Bengal*, VII. p. 224.

[2] A measure of distance equal to about five miles.

manner has the conquest been extended everywhere. I have found therein a heartfelt joy. Such is the satisfaction that comes of religious conquests." [1]

The five contemporary kings mentioned by Asoka have been identified by scholars with the following names of history: Antiochus II., who was ruler of Syria and its vast dependencies in the years 260–247 B.C.; Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt in the years 285–247 B.C.; Antigonus Gonatus, who reigned in Macedonia from 278–242 B.C.; Magas of Cyrene, who died in 258 B.C., and Alexander of Epirus, whose death occurred about the same time. The date of the edict thus falls within the short period 260–258 B. C.

Now on the first reading, this edict conveys the impression that Buddhism had extended its conquests, through the peaceful agency of Asoka, over the greater part of the Greek-speaking world. But there are several considerations that force upon the thoughtful mind a much more restricted interpretation.

First of all, there is very solid ground for suspecting that Asoka, in describing the extent of his religious conquests, allowed himself to be carried by excess of enthusiasm beyond the bounds of sober reality.

In the edict of Rupnath-Mysore, Asoka makes known that for a year or more he was a Buddhist layman without much show of zeal, but that within the last year, since his connection with the Sangha, he had

[1] *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, I. pp. 309–310. Cf. II. pp. 248–249.

taken a lively interest in the religion he had adopted.[1] It is fair to conclude that whatever measures he employed to spread his religious conquests abroad, were not taken in hand till after his thorough conversion to Buddhism. This happened, as we learn from the eighth Girnar edict, in the thirteenth year of his kingly consecration. " I, King Piyadasi, dear to the gods, in the thirteenth year of my consecration, attained to true wisdom [sambodhi.]"[2] Now as Senart shows, it is very likely that the edicts of Girnar were engraved together at the time indicated in the fifth edict, namely, in the fourteenth year of his consecration.[3] And so it follows that Asoka had little more than a year at his disposal, to achieve the religious conquests on which he prides himself. This practically means that his pretensions in regard to the spread of Buddhism in Egypt, Syria, and the other realms beyond, rested on a very slender basis of fact. If he sent Buddhist missionaries to these distant countries, — and the possibility of this cannot be questioned, — he must have been counting beforehand on their success when he framed the edict. It is absolutely incredible that in so short a time they could have made the toilsome journey to Egypt, or Syria, not to speak of Cyrene, Macedonia, and Epirus, won many converts to their religion, and made their achievements known to him in distant India. Senart

[1] Senart, Op. cit. II. p. 196; *Journ. Asiat.*, 1892, pp. 481, 487.
[2] Op. cit. I. p. 197. [3] Op. cit. II. p. 245.

thinks the only knowledge Asoka had of Magas, Antigonus, and Alexander, and, perhaps, of Ptolemy as well, he obtained indirectly through his communications with Antiochus.*

"Although," he writes, "the records of the past have made us acquainted with the names of an envoy or, perhaps, explorer, who was sent to India by the same Ptolemy Philadelphus to whom Piyadasi refers, it is doubtful if this reference of the latter is based on direct relations. But it is very unlikely that direct relations existed between him and Magas, or Antigonus, or Alexander. There is reason to suspect that it was through the intermediation of Antiochus that Piyadasi got his knowledge of the other kings whom he mentions. If he sent out special embassies, the time available for the voyage — about a year and a half — scarcely justifies the supposition that they made their way to so distant parts of the Greek world. Moreover, at the very time that the edict was taking form, between 260 and 258 B. C., Antiochus II., through his attempts on Thrace and his conflicts in the Mediterranean, was brought into very intimate relations, though not for long, with the kings of Egypt, Cyrene, Macedonia, and Epirus." [1]

Viewed in this light, the edict gives no reliable evidence of the spread of Buddhism westward, beyond the Greek or Yavana settlements on the border-land of India and in the extreme eastern part of the vast empire of Antiochus. For it is plainly to these that the portion of the edict refers which reads: "Among the Yavanas and Kambojas . . . everywhere the

[1] Op. cit. II. p. 259.

religious instructions of the king, dear to the gods, are observed."[1]

There are other considerations that add to the likelihood of this view. The most important of these is the absolute ignoring of Buddhism in the ancient records of Greece and Egypt. Had Asoka's missionaries been successful in establishing Buddhism in the Greek-speaking world, so striking a phenomenon would not have failed to excite universal interest. Stupas and monasteries would have arisen, and sacred books would have been translated into Greek to satisfy the piety of Greek converts. Buddhist beliefs and practices would have been a popular theme for historical and philosophic writers. Constant references to Buddhism would have found a place in the literary records. And yet what do we find? Not a single ruin of a Buddhist stupa or monastery in Egypt or Syria or Greece; not a single Greek translation of a sacred Buddhist book; not a single reference in all Greek literature to the existence of a Buddhist community in the Greek world. Nay, the very name of Buddha occurs for the first time only in the writings of Clement of Alexandria.

Another important consideration inclining to the same view, is the silence of the Buddhist chronicles. Had Asoka extended his religious conquests to Syria, Egypt, and other countries to the west, so remarkable a triumph would not have failed to be recorded

[1] Cf. Senart, Op. cit. II. pp. 252–254. *Vide supra*, p. 276.

in Buddhist annals. And yet, in the very passage of the *Mahavansa*,[1] which describes the propagation of the Buddhist faith under King Asoka, as well as in similar accounts in the *Dipavansa*[2] and the *Sutta Vibhanga* of Buddhaghosa,[3] not a word is said of missionary enterprises in Syria or Egypt, not to speak of the more remote countries of Macedonia, Epirus, and Cyrene. The natural inference is that Buddhism did not gain a foothold in these countries.

But, we are told, Buddhist annals afford positive evidence at least that Buddhism flourished in Egypt in the second century before Christ. The *Mahavansa* tells how Buddhist monks came from many distant places to take part in the dedication of the great stupa (Mahathupa) erected by the Ceylonese king Duttha Gamini at Ruanwelli. They came from Benares, and from Sravasti, Vaisali, Kausambi, Patna, Kashmir, Parthia, "and Maha Dhammarakkhito, thero of Yona, accompanied by thirty thousand priests from the vicinity of Alasadda, the capital of the Yona country, attended."[4] As Alasadda is the Pali form of Alexandria, the inference is drawn by some that the city here referred to is Alexandria in Egypt. But there is every reason to believe that reference is here made to Alexandria *ad Caucasum* in the Græco-Bactrian region. First of all, a flourishing community of Buddhist monks could not have lived in the

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 277.
[2] viii. 7, 9.
[3] I. 317.
[4] G. Turnour, *Mahawanso*, p. 171.

vicinity of Alexandria in Egypt without having left behind them traces of their existence in the form of ruined stupas and monasteries, nor could they have been utterly ignored in the literary monuments of that period. Secondly, the Alasadda in question is designated as the capital of the Yona country. But, as we have already learned from our study of another passage from this same chronicle, by the Yona, or Yavana, country, is meant the Græco-Bactrian region. That it has this same meaning in the present instance, is further shown by the fact that it is mentioned immediately after Kashmir and Parthia. Thirdly, it is an unquestionable fact of history that about the capital of this region, Alexandria *ad Caucasum*, were grouped many communities of Buddhist monks, the remains of whose monasteries and stupas exist to-day.

Lastly, we have in favor of this view some of the most eminent scholars of Buddhist archæology, as James Prinsep and Alexander Cunningham.[1] The former, commenting on this very passage from the *Mahavansa*, says: —

"'The vicinity of Alasadda, the capital of the Yona country,' follows in the enumeration the mention of Kashmir, while it precedes the wilderness of Vinjha, which is evidently Vindravan, the modern Bindrabund. In situation, then, as well as in date, I see nothing here to oppose the understanding of Yona as the Greek dominion of Bactria and the Panjab, and I dare even further propose that the name of the capital near

[1] *Bhilsa Topes*, p. 118. Cf. also E. Hardy, *Der Buddhismus*, p. 112.

which the Buddhist monastery was situated, and which Mr. Turnour states in his glossary to be unidentified, is merely a corruption of Alexandria. . . . The particular Alexandria alluded to may probably be that *ad calcem Caucasi*, which is placed at Beghram by Mr. Masson in the fifth volume of my journal, and in the neighborhood of which so many stupendous stupas have been brought to light through his able investigations." [1]

Evidence for the presence of Buddhism in the West is also sought in the story of Zarmanochegas, told by Strabo.[2] A native of India, he came on an embassy to Rome in the time of Augustus, in the name of a certain King Porus. Having accomplished his mission, he went to Athens, where he had a pyre erected, and having anointed his body with precious unguents, as if for a feast, burnt himself alive. His ashes were placed in a tomb which bore the inscription, " Here lies Zarmanochegas, an Indian of Bargosa, who put an end to his life after the fashion of his country."

By a very dubious derivation of the name from Sramana-Sakya, *i. e.*, the Sakya ascetic, a few have tried to make this person out to have been a Buddhist

[1] *Journ. As. Soc. Bengal*, VII. pp. 165–166. Mr. Lillie alleges as a reason for taking Alasadda to be Alexandria in Egypt, that it was much more feasible for thirty thousand monks to make the journey by sea from Egypt to Ceylon, than to come overland from distant Bactria. There is every reason to suspect that the number of monks was grossly exaggerated. But whatever their number, it is plain that the journey from Bactria was no more difficult than that from Parthia, Kashmir, and other places mentioned.

[2] Strabo, XV. i. 719.

monk; [1] but this derivation is not accepted by many scholars.[2] Moreover, as Buddhists were accustomed neither to use ointments for the body, nor to burn themselves alive, there is every reason for excluding Zarmanochegas from the number of Buddha's followers.

Such is the evidence brought forward to show the presence of Buddhist ideas and Buddhist institutions in the Greek world at the time that Christ was born. Its utter inadequacy to the desired end has been sufficiently set forth. The utmost that can be made out for Buddhism is that it found a firm footing in the Greek settlements of Bactria and Parthia, in the remote east. If Asoka sent missionaries to plant the religion of Buddha in the realms of Antiochus and Ptolemy, there is every reason to believe that their efforts came to naught. We look in vain for a single trace of the presence of Buddhism in Egypt, Greece, or Palestine.

[1] Lévi, *Le Bouddhisme et les Grecs — Rev. Hist. Rel.* XXIII. p. 47.
[2] Cf. Lassen, *Ind. Alt.* III. p. 60. E. Hardy, *Buddhismus*, p. 113.

CHAPTER VII

THE POSSIBLE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON BUDDHISM

Parthian Jews converted by Peter — Reliability of the tradition that the apostle Thomas preached to the people of Parthia, Bactria, and Northwest India — Gondophares — The early mission of Pantænus in India — The testimony of Cosmas — The ancient episcopal sees of Merv, Herat, and Sistan — Christian influence in Panjab in the fifth century shown by the Jamalgiri sculptures — The spread of Nestorianism over the East in the fifth and following centuries — The Nestorian monument of Si-ngan-fu — Likelihood that some of the incidents related of Christ have been incorporated into the Buddha-legend — Is the Asita-story one of these?

THERE is a further consideration that adds no little strength to the evidence already accumulated in favor of the independent origin of the Gospels. This is the possibility that Buddhism itself has drawn some of its striking resemblances from Christian sources.

It is rather strange that those who are so zealous in trying to show the presence of Buddhism in Palestine and Egypt at the time of Christ, should ignore the much stronger evidence that Christian influences were at work in centres of Buddhist activity soon

after the death of Christ, and that they flourished with increasing vigor during the first centuries of the Christian era. That Northern Buddhism profited to some extent by this contact with Christianity, is thus by no means unlikely.

In the second chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*, we read that on the day of Pentecost, about three thousand Jews were converted and baptized through the preaching of Peter. His hearers consisted largely of devout Jews from distant parts of the known world, who had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to take part in the sacred feasts of the Pasch and of Pentecost. There were present not only Arabians and Medes and Elamites, but also Parthians. Now the Parthian kingdom, which was at this time being brought under the subjection of the Indo-Scythian monarchs, was included in the so-called Yavana country, where Buddhism had taken firm root. It will be remembered that among the monks who went to Ceylon to the dedication of the Mahathupa, the Parthians are mentioned. It is thus natural to conclude that as early as 35–40 A. D. Jewish converts to Christianity were already in contact with Parthian and Bactrian Buddhists. Between these and the Buddhists of Northern India there existed the closest relations.

But the development of Christianity in the remote east was not left to the weak efforts of these neophytes. According to an ancient tradition in the

Christian Church, St. Thomas was sent to Parthia and Bactria, and after preaching the Gospel there, proceeded to India, where he died a martyr's death.

This tradition has much to commend it, particularly as regards the preaching of St. Thomas in Parthia. It is found in the *Roman Martyrology*. It is alluded to by many fathers of the Greek and Latin Church. So careful a writer as Eusebius, referring to Origen, tells us that Parthia was assigned to the apostle Thomas for evangelization. The ancient Syrian Church, too, bears witness to the apostolate of St. Thomas in the Orient. St. Ephrem, the Syrian, whose period of activity falls within the third quarter of the fourth century, and who lived seven or eight years in Edessa, wrote a poem referring to the possession by the Church of Edessa of the bones of St. Thomas, which had been brought there from India. Similar testimony to the presence of the apostle's relics in the Church of Edessa, is afforded by the *Chronicle of Edessa*, as well as by the early church historians, Rufinus, Socrates, and Sozomen.[1]

[1] Ambrose, *in Psalm*, xlv.; Jerome, *Ep.* 59 *ad Marcellam* (Migne); Gregory Naz., *Oratio*, 33; Paulinus Nolanus, *Poem.* 19 and 30; Gregory the Great, *in Evang. hom.* 17; Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* III. 1; Bickell, *S. Ephræmi Syri Carmina Nisibena.* Lipsiæ, 1866. *Carm.* 42; Assemani, *Bib. Orient.* I. pp. 399, 403; Rufinus, *Ch. Hist.* II. 5; Socrates, *Ch. Hist.* IV. 18; Sozomen, *Ch. Hist.* VI. 18; cf. R. A. Lipsius, *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und Apostellegenden.* Braunschweig, 1883. I. pp. 225 ff. According to the Abgar-legend, St. Thomas was intimately connected with the Church of Edessa. Cf. Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* I. 13; II. 1.

The *Acts of Thomas*, a Gnostic work already ancient in the time of St. Ephrem, tells how the apostle, disguised as an architect, went to India, where he converted King Gondophoros, together with many of his subjects.[1] The story is embellished with episodes too extravagant to be mistaken for history, but the underlying tradition that St. Thomas preached in the kingdom of Gondophares is not lightly to be set aside. The existence of a Parthian king of this name in the time of the apostle has been strangely brought to light in the present century. Numerous coins bearing his name and the names of near relatives have been found in the Panjab, Kabul valley, and neighboring districts, showing him to have been the head of an important Parthian dynasty about the middle of the first century. The great archæologist, General A. Cunningham, to whose careful researches our knowledge of these coins is largely due, says of them: —

"The coins of Gondophares are common in Kabul and Kandahar and Sistan, and in the Western and Southern Panjab. All these countries, therefore, must have owned his sway. He was, besides, the head and founder of his family, as no less than three members of it claim relationship

[1] Cf. W. Wright, *The Apochryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 2 vol. London, 1871. II. pp. 146 ff.; Lipsius, Op. cit. pp. 225 ff.; *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, N. Y. 1895. VIII. 535. These *Acts* are at least as old as the middle of the third century, and possibly go back to about 200 A. D. Cf. Lipsius, Op. cit. p. 346; Holtzmann, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, Freiburg, 1892. p. 496.

with him on their coins — *viz.* Orthagnes, his full brother, Abdagases, his nephew, and Sasa [or Sasan], a more distant relation. The coins of Orthagnes are found in Sistan and Kandahar, those of Abdagases and Sasan in the Western Panjab. I presume, therefore, that they were the viceroys of those provinces on the part of the great King Gondophares, who himself resided at Kabul. All the names are those of Parthians, but the language of the coins is Indian Pali. Abdagases is the name of the Parthian chief who headed the successful revolt against Artabanus in A. D. 44. The great power of Gondophares, and the discovery of a coin of Artabanus countermarked with the peculiar monogram of all the Gondopharian dynasty, make it highly probable that the Indo-Parthian Abdagases was the same as the Parthian chief whose revolt is recorded by Tacitus (Annal. xv, 2) and Josephus (Antiq. xx, iii, 2). This surmise is very much strengthened by the date of the revolt [A. D. 44], which would make Gondophares a contemporary of St. Thomas."[1]

Similar testimony is afforded by the stone found in 1873 at Shahbazgarhi (Taht-i-Bahi) in the Panjab, bearing in Ariano-Pali characters an inscription which records the erection by a pious Buddhist of a religious structure "in the twenty-sixth year of the great King Guduphara, in the Samvat year 103." Such

[1] *Coins of Indian Buddhist Satraps with Greek Inscriptions.* — *Journ. As. Soc., Bengal*, XXIII. pp. 711–712. Cf. also *Archæological Survey of India*, II. pp. 59–60; XIV. pp. 48 and 116; Reinaud, *Mémoires historiques et géographiques sur l'Inde*, an interesting article to be found in Vol. XVIII. pp. 94–96, of *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*; Percy Gardner, *Coins of the Greek and Scythic kings of Bactria and India*, pp. xliv, 103–106.

at least is the reading made out by General Cunningham and other eminent scholars,[1] though the stone is so badly defaced as to leave doubt in the minds of some whether the name of the king has been correctly deciphered. As the first year of the Samvat era is 56 B. C., the date of the inscription is in perfect agreement with the results obtained independently from the study of the coins above mentioned. There is thus good ground for asserting that Gondophares was a contemporary of St. Thomas, having dominion over the Kabul valley, Kandahar, and the Panjab, *i. e.*, the very countries (Parthia and India) to which the apostle is said to have carried the Gospel; and hence it is but reasonable to accept the conclusion of eminent scholars such as General Cunningham,[2] Reinaud, and others that the tradition concerning St. Thomas' missionary labors in the kingdom of Parthia stands for a fact of history. To reject this tradition, against which no argument of improbability can fairly be urged, and which is supported by so many ancient and independent testimonies, is to exercise a scepticism which, if consistently applied to other records of the past, would lead to the discrediting of many accepted truths of history. We need have no hesitation, then, in taking it as reliable evidence of the presence of

[1] *Archæological Survey of India*, V. pp. 59–60. Professor Dowson, in *Journ. Roy. As. Soc.* (New Series), VII. pp. 376 ff. Percy Gardner, Op. cit. p. xliv.

[2] *Archæol. Survey*, II. pp. 59–60. *Vide supra*, p. 187.

Christianity in the very heart of Northern Buddhism as early as 50 A. D.[1]

But the evidence of early Christian activity in Buddhist lands does not end here. Bardesanes of Edessa, a contemporary of Marcus Aurelius, mentions the spread of Christianity in Parthia, Media, Persia, and Bactria.[2]

Moreover, Eusebius relates in his *Church History*[3] that Pantænus, previous to founding his Christian school of philosophy at Alexandria towards the close of the second century, was moved by apostolic zeal to preach the Gospel in the far East. He went to India, and there found Christians who had been evangelized by St. Bartholomew, and who still preserved the *Gospel of Matthew* written in Hebrew.

[1] The attempt of Gutschmid (*Die Königsnamen in den apokryphen Apostelgeschichten*, an article published in the *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, N. F. XIX. pp. 161 ff.) to make out that the *Acts of Thomas* are an adaptation of a Buddhist sutra is far from convincing. No Buddhist sutra corresponding even remotely to the *Acts* has ever been discovered. The features of alleged Buddhist origin, such as the severe asceticism, especially in regard to marriage, the miracles, the exorcism of demons, the Christophanies, are to be found as well in other apocryphal writings, where Buddhist influence is out of the question. Moreover, some features of the *Acts* have no parallel in Buddhist literature. The statement in the *Acts* that St. Thomas journeyed by sea from Jerusalem to the country of Gondophares is easily explained on the ground that the work was written in some Gnostic centre in Persia by one ignorant of the geography of Palestine. The only other reason given by Gutschmid for ascribing a Buddhist origin to the work in question is the fact that, in the time of Christ, Buddhism was already established in the kingdom of Gondophares. The insufficiency of this reason is manifest.

[2] Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.* VI. 10.

[3] V. 10.

Owing to a lack of sufficient data, the precise location of these Jewish Christians of India cannot be made out with certainty, but it is enough for our purpose to note that they were established on Buddhist soil. It is true, a few are inclined with Mosheim [1] to hold that they did not belong to India proper, but to Yemen (Arabia Felix), which was the seat of a thriving Jewish community and which was sometimes loosely designated as India. But in Alexandria, where Eusebius must have got his information, the term India could hardly have been employed in any but the strict sense, owing to the close commercial relations existing between India and this great cosmopolitan centre. It was in India proper that Jerome placed the scene of Pantænus' labors, for he says he was sent to India to preach the Gospel to the Brahmans and philosophers.[2] It is thus very likely that reference is made to some colony of Jews, in part at least Christian, established for purposes of trade at one of the great marts of Western India, perhaps, Sinde. According to ancient tradition, India Citerior was the scene of Bartholomew's earlier labors. We know from the author of the *Periplus* [3] and from Cosmas Indicopleustes that the marts of Western

[1] *Ecclesiastical History.* N. Y. 1844, Vol. I. p. 98.

[2] "Pantænus, Stoicæ sectæ philosophus, ob præcipuæ eruditionis gloriam, a Demetrio Alexandriæ episcopo missus est in Indiam ut Christum apud Brachmanas et illius gentis philosophos prædicaret." *Ep. lxx ad Magnum* (Migne).

[3] Cf. J. W. McCrindle, *The Commerce and Navigation of the Erythræan Sea.* London, 1879, pp. 107 ff.

India were regularly visited by merchant ships from Alexandria. The journey of Pantænus is thus easily explained. Like other early churches composed of Jewish converts, this Christian community did not succeed in transmitting the faith through many generations. In the time of Cosmas it seems to have been no longer in possession of its apostolic traditions, else it would in all probability have been mentioned by him.[1]

These converts of St. Bartholomew were not the only Christians settled on the coast of Western India. The Egyptian monk, Cosmas Indicopleustes,[2] who, as a merchant, travelled by sea from Alexandria to Ceylon in the year 522, testifies to the presence in his day of Christian churches in Ceylon, Malabar, and Calliana. They were composed of Syrian-speaking families, the descendants, apparently, of settlers attracted at some remote period from their native land to these great marts of India. Those who administered to their spiritual wants were educated and ordained in Persia, speaking of course the Syrian tongue, and being at that time Nestorians. If we may

[1] G. M. Rae (*The Syrian Church in India*, Edinburgh, 1892, pp. 70 ff.) is of the opinion that this Christian community discovered by Pantænus was composed, not of Jews, but of Parthians situated in the Indus valley. The Gospel in question he takes to have been written in Aramaic, the knowledge of which was widely spread in Parthia. Josephus tells his readers that he wrote his *Wars of the Jews* in Aramaic, for the benefit of the Babylonians and Parthians.

[2] *Topographia Christiana*, III. *Pat. Gr. Migne.* Vol. 88, col. 169; also col. 445–448.

trust the tradition of their modern representatives, the Syrian Christians of Malabar,[1] it was St. Thomas himself who brought to their ancestors, already settled on the coast of India, the knowlege of the Gospel. These churches gave evidence in Cosmas' day of having been long established; for they were thoroughly organized, being governed by a bishop, who had his see at Calliana.

Thus in the first and second centuries, we find Christianity established in Parthia, Bactria, Northwestern India, and probably along its Western coast from the Gujerat peninsula to Ceylon.

But it was especially in the next two centuries that the new religion advanced with rapid strides.[2] Its growth was hastened in the fourth century by the persecutions of King Sapor II., which drove many Christians to Chorassan, Sistan, and neighboring places. Among them was Barsabbas, who came to Merv in the year 334, and was soon after made bishop over the numerous communities that grew apace in the city and neighboring villages. By the end of the century, Merv was a see of importance. In like manner, the episcopal see of Herat rose out of the multiplying parishes in Southern Chorassan. Both these sees, as well as that of Sistan, were

[1] This tradition is called in question by some scholars. Cf. Germann, *Die Kirche der Thomaschristen.* Gütersloh, 1877. G. M. Rae, Op. cit. ch. ix.

[2] One of the bishops who sat in the Council of Nice was John Bishop of Persia and Great India.

represented in the synod of Dad-Jesus held in the year 430.[1]

Of the condition of Christianity in Panjab, Christian records have nothing to say. We have indeed the testimony of St. John Chrysostom, who, in his second homily on the *Gospel of St. John*, says:

"The Syrians and the Egyptians, the Indians and the Persians, the Ethiopians and innumerable other peoples have translated into their own tongue the teachings received from Christ, and have thus learned true philosophy, barbarians though they be."

But where Christian documents are silent, the very Buddhist monuments give testimony. The Buddhist sculptures on the walls of the ruined monasteries at Jamalgiri, near Peshawar, in Northern Panjab, tell better than words how Christianity was making itself felt in the very centre of Northern Buddhism. For the astonishing spectacle is here revealed of scenes from the life of Christ carved in stone on Buddhist walls that are thought to be as early as the fifth century, thus going back to the time when Merv, Herat, and Sistan were important episcopal sees. These sculptures, which are reproduced by Fergusson and Burgess in their interesting work *The Cave Temples of India*,[2] are thus described: —

"One of the most interesting peculiarities of the Peshawar, or rather Gandhara sculptures, is that it would not be

[1] T. J. Lamy et A. Gueluy, *Le monument chrétien de Si-ngan-fou*. Bruxelles, 1898. pp. 101, 105.

[2] pp. 138–139.

difficult to select from among them several that would form admirable illustrations for a pictorial bible at the present day. One, for instance, is certainly intended to represent the nativity. The principal figure, a woman, is laying her child in a manger, and that it is intended to be such is proved by a mare with its foal, attended by a man, feeding out of a similar vessel. Above are represented two horses' heads in the position that the ox and the ass are represented in mediæval paintings.

"A second represents the boy Christ disputing with the doctors in the temple. A third, Christ healing the man with the withered limb, either of which, if exhibited in the Lateran, and relabeled, might pass unchallenged as sculptures of the fourth or fifth centuries."

Another sculpture is also reproduced which, in all probability, depicts the woman accused before our Lord of adultery.

For the first four centuries, the Christians in the Buddhist lands of Eastern Persia and Northwestern India were orthodox. But soon after the council of Ephesus, in 431, the majority of these Christians went over to Nestorianism. The Nestorian Catholicos or Patriarch established his see at Selucia-Ctesiphon. The next few centuries witnessed a remarkable growth and spread of Nestorianism. It absorbed the Christian churches already established in India and on the confines to the Northwest. It took firm root in Turkestan, whence it made its way to China itself. The Nestorian monument of Si-ngan-fu offers incontestable evidence that as early as 635 zealous Nestorian

missionaries had reached the western capital of China.[1] So rapid was the growth of Nestorianism that before this century was over, the patriarch of Ctesiphon had under him two hundred bishops, of whom twenty were metropolitans. Under the patriarch Saliba Zacha, who presided over the Nestorian sect from 714 to 728, Herat, Sarmakand, and China were erected into metropolitan sees. They maintained their existence till the fourteenth century.[2]

It is easy to see how Tibetan Buddhism, which took its rise in the seventh century, and which did not receive its full development till the thirteenth, may have drawn largely from Nestorian sources for those striking features which distinguish it from India Buddhism, and at the same time offer analogies with certain points of Catholic ritual and discipline. But can we say that the Buddhism of Northern India owes anything to Christian influence?

Weber [3] maintains that "The supposition that Christian influences may have affected the growth of Buddhist ritual and worship, as they did that of the Buddha legends, is by no means to be dismissed out of hand."

[1] Lamy et Gueluy, *Monument chrétien de Si-ngan-fou;* also J. Legge, *Christianity in China in the 7th and 8th Centuries*, London, 1888. It was just ten years later that Hiouen Thsang returned to Si-ngan-fu from his long pilgrimage to India, and it is not unlikely that the Nestorian Olopen met him at the court of the emperor Ta'e Tsung.

[2] *Monument chrétien de Si-ngan-fou*, pp. 43 and 105.

[3] *Hist. of Ind. Lit.* p. 307 n.

Professor Beal,[1] Goblet d'Alviella,[2] E. Hardy,[3] and other scholars of recognized ability hold similar views. The well known tendency of Buddhism to assimilate elements in other religious systems with which it came in contact, creates the presumption that so positive and self-asserting a religion as the Christian did not exist for several centuries by the side of Buddhism without exercising some influence upon it. The presence of New Testament illustrations among the sculptures at Jamalgiri gives additional force to this presumption.[4]

Nevertheless, when one tries to estimate the extent of that influence, one finds the problem by no means easy. The greatest caution is necessary. To conclude that every Buddhist legend or thought or rite, not plainly prechristian, and offering some incomplete analogy with Christian doctrine or ritual, must have been derived from Christian sources, would be to repeat the blunders which vitiate the works of Seydel, Bunsen, and Lillie. But the possibility of such borrowing cannot be denied, and hence resemblances of this character cannot be made to tell against the independent origin of the Gospels.

[1] *Abstract of Four Lectures on Buddhist Literature in China*, p. xiv.

[2] *Bull. de l'Académie Royale des Sciences des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, 1897, pp. 723 ff.

[3] *Der Buddhismus*, p. 111. *Vide supra*, p. 187.

[4] The Krishna cult, which received its present form, according to the best authorities, in the fifth or sixth century A. D., was strongly influenced by Christian traditions. Cf. Weber, *Indische Studien*, II. pp. 399–490.

These remarks apply with especial aptness to the use that is made of the Asita legend to prejudice the Gospel story of Simeon. We have seen that the two stories, though presenting striking resemblances, are also marked by very important divergencies. The possibility of their independent origin cannot thus be denied. But those who think the resemblances are such as to create the strong presumption of relationship, are too hasty when they infer that the writer of the third Gospel must have been the borrower. The possibility is at least as great that the story of Asita is based on the story of Simeon.

The earliest monument of the existence of the Asita legend is the *Buddha Charita*, which, as we have seen, is not earlier than 70 A. D., and may be as late as 100 A. D. In the cave numbered XVI of Ajanta, there is a pictorial representation of Asita with the infant Buddha in his arms; but this picture is of an age not greater than the fifth century of the Christian era.[1] The contact of Christians with the Buddhists of Bactria and Northwestern India as early as 40–50 A. D., thus gives rise to the possibility, if not the presumption, that this Buddhist parallel, which is commonly set up as one of the strongest witnesses against the originality of the Gospels, is of Christian origin.

[1] Cf. Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples of India*, p. 308; also J. Burgess, *Notes on the Bauddha Rock-temples of Ajanta*, pp. 3 and 60. S. H. Kellogg, in his *Light of Asia and the Light of the World*, p. 158, erroneously assigns this representation to a tope dating from about 300 B. C.

To sum up: neither in the religious system of the Essenes, nor in the inscriptions of Asoka, nor in the Buddhist chronicles, nor in the architectural or literary monuments of the ancient Greek world, is there a particle of solid evidence that the knowledge of Buddhism in the time of Christ had extended westward beyond the Græco-Bactrian district, on the confines of India. The absence alone of such evidence is fatal to the theory that Buddhism has contributed largely to the formation of the Gospels. Taken in connection with the apostolic origin of the *Gospels of Matthew* and *Luke*, and with the fewness of the Buddhist-Christian resemblances that do not admit of easy explanation, it offers all but irresistible proof of the independent origin of the Gospels.

CHAPTER VIII

BUDDHISM VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY

The miracles of Christ above comparison with those ascribed to Buddha: the latter unvouched by contemporary witnesses and tainted by absurdities — Examples — Buddhism a religion not of enlightenment, but of superstition and error — Karma and its implied transmigration a false assumption — The failure of Buddhism to recognize man's dependence on the supreme God — Buddhism lacking in the powerful Christian motives to right conduct — Buddhist morality utilitarian — Nirvana not an appeal to unselfishness — Buddhist pessimism a crime against nature — Its injustice to the individual, to the family, to society — Buddhist propagandism far inferior to the Christian — Alliance of Buddhism with local superstitions — Buddhist benevolence greatly surpassed by Christian works of charity — The impotence of Buddhism to elevate the people of Asia — Sad state of morals in Buddhist lands — Slavery and polygamy untouched by Buddhism — The degenerate condition of the Buddhist order — The transcendent excellence of Christianity.

THERE has been a tendency on the part of some to extol the religion of Buddha as the equal, if not the superior, of the revelation of Christ. What is best in the teaching of the Gospels is claimed to be in like manner the possession of Buddhism. The transcendent excellence of the former is not acknowledged, its claim to be the unique expression of the divine will is impugned. Buddhism is set up

as a legitimate rival of Christianity, and efforts are even made to secure it a foothold in Christian lands.

It is this narrow and imperfect view that is responsible in part for the futile attempts to establish the indebtedness of Christianity to Buddhism, for when the incomparable superiority of the religion of Christ is once recognized, there is little reason to look to a religion like Buddhism for the source of its lofty teachings.

Let us then make a brief review of Buddhism from the Christian standpoint, and note its serious shortcomings.

It is the fashion nowadays to oppose to the miracles wrought by Christ in confirmation of His divine mission, the wonderful things which the Buddhist scriptures ascribe to their religious hero. Not that the latter are held to be true, but they are put forth by way of analogy to impair the miraculous credentials of Jesus. It is argued that if the one is to be trusted as a divine teacher because of His wondrous works, the other, being likewise accredited with miracles, has an equal right to confidence and faith.

The argument is utterly sophistic, for the reason that there is no parity between the miracles told of Christ and those ascribed to Buddha. The former are of a character in every way worthy of one who declared Himself to be the Saviour of mankind, and being recorded by His apostles and disciples, who

were constant eye-witnesses of His wonderful works, are beyond the suspicion of invention.

While there is thus solid reason to give credence to the Gospel narrative of the miracles of Christ, there is no ground for treating the alleged miracles of Buddha as other than idle myths. It was not till centuries after Buddha's death that they found a place in the sacred records, and, moreover, the vast majority are so childish and stupid as to bear on their face the stamp of their fanciful origin.

The extravagances of the *Lalita Vistara*, the prominent sacred narrative of the Northern school, would provoke a smile in most children of even tender years. The twelfth chapter, which tells of the exploits of the young prince Gotama in his competition with other youths for the hand of Gopa, the princess of marvellous beauty, reads like a tale of Munchausen. Take, for example, the well known elephant-incident. A huge white elephant is being led into the city as a present for Gotama, when his cousin, Devadatta, filled with envy and proud of his strength, seizes the trunk of the monster with his left hand, and with his right gives it so powerful a slap as to knock it lifeless to the ground. Sundarananda, another youthful rival, happens by. He takes the carcass by the tail and drags it unaided outside the city-gate. Then comes Gotama, riding in his chariot. Seeing the carcass so near the city-gate, a threatening source of stench by its inevitable decay, without dismounting from his

chariot, he seizes its tail with the toe of his foot, and hurls it several miles through the air, so that in the violence of its fall, it makes a huge depression in the ground, known henceforth as the Elephant-ditch!

What a contrast between the dignified wonders of our blessed Saviour and the following display of power said to have been made by Buddha to confound some doubting heretics.

"Buddha ascended to the immense road which he had created in the air in the presence of the crowd, that filled a place of eighteen youdzanas in breadth and twenty-four in length. These wonders which he was about to display, were the result of his own wisdom, and could not be imitated by anyone. He caused a stream of water to issue from the upper part of his body, and flames of fire from the lower part, and on a sudden, the reverse to take place; again fire issued from his right eye, and streams of water from his left eye, and so on from his nostrils, ears, right and left, in front and behind. The same wonder, too, happened in such a way that the streams of fire succeeded the streams of water, but without mingling with each other. Each stream in an upward direction reached the seats of the Brahmas; each stream in a downward direction penetrated as far as hell; each in a horizontal direction reached the extremities of the world. From each of his hairs the same wonderful display feasted the astonished eyes of the assembled people. The six glories gushed, as it were, from every part of his body, and made it appear resplendent beyond description. Having no one to converse with, he created a personage, who appeared to walk with him. Sometimes he sat down, while his companion was pacing along; and at other times, he himself walked, whilst his interlocutor was either standing or

sitting. . . . The people who heard him and saw the wonderful works he performed, obtained the understanding of the four great principles."[1]

Lest it may be objected that these tales do not do justice to Buddhism, being drawn from the later, legendary writings, let us note one or two examples taken from portions of the sacred canon that are reckoned among the earliest of the Buddhist scriptures.

The *Mahavagga* recounts the various miracles, all of them puerile, that Buddha wrought to secure the conversion of the Brahman ascetic Uruvela Kassapa and his five hundred followers. The first wonder, his triumphant encounter with the Naga king, a venomous serpent of deadly magical power, is told as follows:

"Then the Blessed One entered the room where the fire was kept, made himself a couch of grass, and sat down cross-legged, keeping the body erect and surrounding himself with watchfulness of mind. And the Naga saw that the Blessed One had entered; when he saw that, he became annoyed and irritated, and sent forth a cloud of smoke. Then the Blessed One thought: 'What if I were to leave intact the skin, and hide, and flesh, and ligaments, and bones, and marrow of this Naga; but were to conquer the fire, which he will send forth, by my fire.'

"And the Blessed One effected the appropriate exercise of miraculous power and sent forth a cloud of smoke. Then the Naga, who could not master his rage, sent forth flames. And the Blessed One, converting his body into fire, sent forth flames. When they both shone forth with their flames,

[1] Bigandet, *Legend of Gautama*, I. pp. 218–219.

the fire room looked as if it were burning and blazing, as if it were all in flames. And the Jathilas, surrounding the fire room, said: 'Truly, the countenance of the great Samana is beautiful, but the Naga will do harm to him.'

"That night having elapsed, the Blessed One, leaving intact the skin and hide and flesh and ligaments and bones and marrow of that Naga, and conquering the Naga's fire by his fire, threw him into his alms-bowl, and showed him to the Jathila Uruvela Kassapa [saying], 'Here you see the Naga, Kassapa; his fire has been conquered by my fire.'

"Then the Jathila Uruvela Kassapa thought: 'Truly, the great Samana possesses high magical powers and great faculties, in that he is able to conquer by his fire the fire of that savage Naga king, who is possessed of magical power, that dreadfully venomous serpent. He is not, however, holy [araha] as I am.'"[1]

The display which the *Selasutta* ascribes to Buddha to convince the Brahman Sela of his Buddhaship is as puerile as it is undignified. Out of delicacy, a few portions of the original are omitted.

"Then the Brahmana Sela went to the place where Bhagavat was, and having gone there he talked pleasantly with Bhagavat, and after having had some pleasant and remarkable conversation with him, he sat down apart, and while sitting down apart, Sela, the Brahmana, looked for the thirty-two signs of a great man on the body of Bhagavat. And the Brahmana Sela saw the thirty-two signs of a great man on the body of Bhagavat with the exception of two; in respect to two of the signs of a great man he had doubts, he hesitated, he was not satisfied, he was not assured . . . as to his having a large tongue.

[1] *S. B. E.* XII. pp. 119–120.

"Then this occurred to Bhagavat: 'This Brahmana Sela sees in me the thirty-two signs of a great man, with the exception of two; in respect to two of the signs of a great man, he has doubts, he hesitates, he is not satisfied, he is not assured . . . as to my having a large tongue.' . . . Then Bhagavat, having put out his tongue, touched and stroked both his ears, touched and stroked both nostrils, and the whole circumference of his forehead he covered with his tongue." [1]

A religious system that teaches such inanities of its founder, betrays at once the superstitious character of the minds on which it counts for its preservation. Between extravagances like these, and the miraculous stories in the Gospels, there is but the remotest analogy.

There are some, indeed, who would have us believe that Buddhism is a religion of enlightenment, the enemy of ignorance and superstition. This judgment is not warranted by the facts. On the contrary, Buddhism is a system that appeals only to the ignorant and the superstitious. I do not now speak of the emasculated Buddhism of writers like Dr. Carus, which is nothing more than a polite agnosticism under the thin veil of Buddhist terminology; but I have in mind the historic teaching of Buddha.

If we turn to the fundamental tenets of Buddhism, we find grave defects that betray its inadequacy to become the religion of enlightened humanity, and

[1] *S. B. E.* X. p. 101.

that bring out in bold relief its inferiority to the religion of Jesus Christ.

In the first place, the very foundation on which Buddhism rests — the doctrine of karma, with its implied transmigration — is false and gratuitous. Borrowed from the pantheistic teaching current in Buddha's day, it seems to have been accepted from the first as an unquestionable principle. In all the Buddhist scriptures, there is not a passage in which its demonstration is essayed. This pretended law of nature, by which the multitudinous gods, ghosts, men, animals, and demons are but the transient forms of rational beings essentially the same, but forced to this diversity in consequence of their varying degrees of merit and demerit in former lives, is a huge superstition in flat contradiction to atavism and the other well-known laws of heredity, and hence rightly ignored in all works of science. Now and then an irresponsible voice is heard proclaiming the harmony which exists between this doctrine and the theory of evolution. But it is hardly part of biological teaching that a good (!) rat or snake may succeed in being reborn as a man or a god. Scientists have not yet reached that state of imbecility in which they think they see in the manifold forms of animal life the representatives of men who in former generations did not live up to the dignity of their human condition.

Another fundamental defect in the teaching of

Buddha is its failure to recognize man's dependence on a supreme Lord and Creator, while retaining superstitious belief in the innumerable devas of the Hindu pantheon. Buddha lacked the penetration of mind to enable him to discern in these deities nothing but empty names, and at the same time to rise to the conception of the Supreme God, towards which the more thoughtful of the Brahmans were groping. The most he could do was to adopt the pantheistic view prevalent in his day, that these gods, though real, were powerless to effect man's eternal welfare. By ignoring the Supreme God, and by making salvation to rest solely on personal effort, he substituted for the Brahman religion a cold and colorless system of philosophy. For that can scarcely be called a religious system in which the very core of religion — the lively sense of dependence on a supernatural being — is lacking. In primitive Buddhism, no provision is made for those questionings of mind and yearnings of heart that have found expression in the religious utterances of almost every people. It is shorn of those powerful motives to right conduct that spring from the sense of dependence on a personal God and Father, — obedience, love, gratitude, reverential fear, feeling of confidence, and sense of divine assistance.

Hence it is that Buddhist morality in its last analysis is a selfish utilitarianism. There is no sense of duty, as in the religion of Christ, prompted by rever-

ence for the Supreme Law-giver, by love for the merciful and kind Father, by personal allegiance to the divine Redeemer. Karma, the basis of Buddhist morality, is like any other law of nature, the observance of which is prompted by prudential considerations. The Buddhist avoids bad conduct for the same reason that he avoids contact with fire, — because of the disastrous consequences.[1] While his conscience undoubtedly smites him for doing wrong, yet he is a stranger to the sense of sin whereby the erring Christian reproaches himself for having offended the all-good God, and is prompted to grief and the seeking of forgiveness. The Buddhist scriptures possess nothing like the beautiful *Miserere* psalm, which has brought comfort to so many contrite hearts throughout the Christian world.

As the final motive in Buddhism for shunning wickedness is to escape the fancied consequences of vile and unhappy rebirths, so the final motive for the practice of virtue is to attain either to the eternal

[1] Rev. R. Spence Hardy, for more than twenty-five years a missionary in Ceylon, says on this point: "From the absence of a superior motive to obedience, Buddhism becomes a system of selfishness. The principle set forth in the vicarious endurances of the Bodhisat is forgotten. It is a vast scheme of profits and losses, reduced to regular order. The acquirement of merit by the Buddhist is as mercenary an act as the toils of the merchant. . . . The disciple of Buddha is not taught to abhor crime because of its exceeding sinfulness, but because its commission will be to him a personal injury. There is no moral pollution in sin; it is merely a calamity to be deprecated, or a misfortune to be shunned." *Manual of Budhism*, p. 507.

Nirvana, or to some one of the Brahman heavens (Swarga), where for a long, but limited period, one may enjoy all the pleasures of sense like the gods. To the gross superstition which characterizes this eschatology, it is needless to call attention. But it is important to note that the Nirvana of the arhat, as well as the Swarga of the less perfect Buddhist, is the object of interested desire. This disposes of a comparison sometimes made between Buddhist and Christian eschatology to the prejudice of the latter. Not infrequently one meets the assertion that Buddha surpassed Jesus by holding out to struggling humanity an end utterly unselfish. This is a mistake. Not to speak of Swarga, with its positive, even sensual delights, the fact that Nirvana is a negative ideal of bliss does not make it the less an object of interested desire. Far from being an unselfish end, Nirvana is based wholly on the motive of self-love. It thus stands on a much lower level than the Christian ideal, which, being primarily and essentially union of friendship with God in heaven, appeals to motives of disinterested as well as interested love.[1]

Another fatal defect of the teaching of Buddha is its false pessimism. A strong and healthy mind revolts against the morbid view that life is not worth living, that every form of conscious existence is an

[1] It is not to be forgotten that self-love is a necessary law of our being, and when duly regulated, is a legitimate motive of action. It enters into the purest and noblest forms of friendship. It is thus not to be despised because it is not the highest motive of human conduct.

evil. Buddhism stands condemned by the voice of nature, whose dominant tone is one of hope and joy. Nor can it be retorted with fairness that the Christian view of life is pessimistic as well. Between the pessimism of Christianity and that of Buddhism, there is all the difference in the world. The Christian sees the goodness of God's creation marred by sin; he is saddened by the constant struggle between his good and evil impulses; he knows that the present life is incomparably inferior to the fulness of life in heaven which God has in store for them who love Him; and so, while thankful for the present life with its admixture of joy and sorrow, he has his heart fixed on his abiding home in heaven. He feels that it is good for him to have enjoyed this earthly existence, but he looks with yearning to the better life beyond. On the other hand, Buddhism encourages its votaries to look upon the present life as an unmixed evil. It is an arraignment of nature itself for possessing that which is its crown of honor, the perfection of rational life. Its highest ambition is to destroy that perfection by bringing all living beings to the unconscious repose of Nirvana. Buddhism is thus guilty of a capital crime against nature.

In consequence of this unnatural pessimism, the religion of Buddha does injustice to the individual. All legitimate desires must be repressed, for they are held to be evil. Innocent recreations are condemned; the cultivation of music is forbidden; researches in

natural science are discountenanced; the development of the mind is limited to the memorizing of Buddhist texts and the study of Buddhist metaphysics, of which only a minimum is of any genuine value. The Buddhist ideal on earth is a state of passive indifference to everything. The perfect man is one in whom all impulses are benumbed, who is given to a life of dreamy inactivity, whose highest act is the trance-like contemplation of the negativeness of Nirvana. The intended result of Buddhist discipline is the extinction of all individuality.

How different is the teaching of Him who came that men might have life and have it more abundantly! Man's perfection consists not in the repression of all desires, but in their proper control, so as to subserve the harmonious development of his moral, intellectual, and physical faculties. Christianity is thus in harmony with nature, while Buddhism stunts and distorts the growth of the individual by its unreasonable measures of restraint.

Buddhist pessimism is unjust to the family. Buddha inculcated a hearty contempt for the state of marriage. He exhorted his fellow-men to shun married life as they would avoid a pit of burning coals. The procreation of life he held in abhorrence, since life was a misery. Only to those who devoted themselves to the celibate state did he hold out the hope of attaining at death to Nirvana. In thus branding marriage as a state unworthy of man, Buddhism betrays its in-

feriority to the religion of Christ, which recommends virginity as a higher state of life, but at the same time teaches marriage to be a sacred union, a source of sanctification, the divinely appointed means of fulfilling the law, "Increase and multiply."

In consequence of its pessimistic spirit, Buddhism does injustice to society also. It has set the seal of approval on the Brahman prejudice against manual labor. Since life is not worth living, to labor for the comforts and refinements of civilized life is a waste of energy. And so industrial occupations are held in contempt. The perfect man is not to live by the labor of his hands, but on the alms of others. Even the practice of medicine is beneath his notice.

In the religion of Christ, the "carpenter's son," a healthier view prevails. The dignity of labor is upheld, and every form of industry is encouraged that tends to promote man's welfare.

A comparison of the fruits of Buddhism with those of Christianity, brings out in still bolder relief the vast superiority of the latter.

The mistake is often made of attributing to the religion of Buddha a more successful propagandism than to the religion of Christ. We have already seen that the number of Buddhists, far from comprising one third of the human race, is in reality much less than the number of Christians.[1] But even if Buddhism outranked Christianity in number of adherents, the

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 152.

superiority of the latter as a world-religion would remain untouched. Christianity has extended its immense conquests, not by compromising with error and superstition, but by winning souls to the exclusive acceptance of its saving truths. Wherever it has spread, it has maintained its individuality.

It is not so with the religion of Buddha. Beginning as a religion without divine worship, it lacked the consistency and vitality needed to secure it from the elements of change. Just as in the Northern school, it became the very opposite of what Buddha taught to men, so too in spreading to foreign lands it accommodated itself to the gross superstitions of the peoples it sought to win. In Nepal, it has adopted the idolatrous and obscene nature-worship of degenerate Hinduism. In Tibet, while enriching its liturgy with adaptations from Nestorianism, it has not scrupled to give its sanction to degrading shamanistic observances. In like manner, the Buddhism of China, Mongolia, Japan, and Assam is overlaid with superstitions peculiar to these respective countries. It would be little to the credit of the religion of Christ if it spread abroad at such a cost as this.

Buddhism has but little to show in comparison with what Christianity has accomplished for the uplifting of humanity. One of its most attractive features, which unfortunately has become well-nigh obsolete, was its practice of benevolence towards the sick and needy. Between Brahmans and Buddhists there was

a commendable rivalry in maintaining dispensaries of food and medicine. But this form of charity, excellent in its way, was not broad enough to cover all kinds of destitution. It did not, like Christian charity, extend to the prolonged nursing of unfortunates stricken with contagious and incurable diseases, to the protection of foundlings, to the bringing up of orphans, to the rescue of fallen women, to the unflagging care of the aged and insane. Asylums and hospitals, in this sense, are unknown to Buddhism. The consecration of religious men and women to the lifelong service of afflicted humanity is a purpose foreign to dreamy Buddhist monasticism. In the works of mercy of the Vincentian Sisters of Charity alone, there is more genuine beneficence than in the whole range of Buddhist activity.

The wonderful efficacy displayed by the religion of Christ in purifying the morals of pagan Europe, and transforming its heterogeneous mass of humanity into a united society intolerant of polygamy, concubinage, prostitution, indiscriminate divorce, infanticide, slavery, and other social evils, has no parallel in Buddhist annals. Wherever Buddhism has prevailed, it has proved singularly inefficient to lift up society to a high standard of morality. It has not weaned the people of Tibet and Mongolia from the cruel custom of abandoning the aged, nor the Chinese from the equally cruel practice of infanticide. It has not touched the crying evil of slavery in Tibet, Mon-

golia, China, Burma, Assam, Laos, and Siam. Outside the order of nuns, it has done next to nothing to raise woman from her state of degradation in oriental lands. Not to speak of polygamy and concubinage, which are openly practised in all Buddhist countries, the temporary marriages contracted without disgrace between transient foreigners and women of Burma, Tibet, and Mongolia, the prevalence of polyandry in the two latter countries, the shocking frequency of divorce, and the light estimate put on chastity in Ceylon, Burma, Laos, Mongolia, and Tibet, bear witness to the utter helplessness of Buddhism to cope with the moral plagues of degenerate humanity.

The reasons for this impotence are not far to seek. In the first place, as has been pointed out above, Buddhism is lacking in the strong, inspiriting motives to right conduct that are the glorious possession of the religion of Jesus Christ. Another reason is that it has concentrated its energy on the small circle of its monks and nuns, while the laity, aside from the routine of periodical preaching, have been left to shift for themselves. Lastly, Buddhism has failed to rise to the recognition of monogamy as the only proper basis for society. Like all religions of antiquity, it has tolerated in lay society the customs of polygamy and easy divorce. While holding up celibacy as the only proper state for man, and while insisting on its strict observance by the members of his order, Buddha looked with equal indifference on

the monogamous and polygamous practices sanctioned by Hindu law. The assertion now and then made that Buddha abolished polygamy, is as untrue as the assertion that he abolished caste. There is not a single text in the whole range of Buddhist scriptures that inveighs against the abuses of polygamy and indiscriminate repudiation. On the contrary, the Buddha-legend, while proclaiming the sinlessness of its hero, points with complacency to the period in his early manhood when he lived in oriental luxury surrounded by his many hundred wives.[1] The early Buddhist scriptures refer to the extensive seraglio of their pet convert, Bimbisara, without so much as hinting any derogation on his part from the standard of conduct befitting a royal Buddhist layman.[2] The evidence of later generations indicates no progress towards a higher view of marriage. The eighth *Column Edict of Delhi* and the fragmentary *Edict of the Queen* go to show that the great Asoka was a polygamist.[3] The bas-reliefs of the Sanchi and Amravati topes depict Buddhist nobles diverting themselves with their numerous concubines.[4] It was owing to the influence of his two Buddhist wives

[1] Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. 75.

[2] Cf. *S. B. E.* XIII. p. 191; also *S. B. E.* XVII. p. 180, where his wives are said to be five hundred.

[3] Cf. Senart, *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, II. pp. 92–93, 98, 103, 271.

[4] Cf. Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, plates xxiv., lxii., lxix., lxxii., lxxiii., lxxxiv., and xci.

that the king of Tibet made overtures to establish Buddhism in his realm. The official head of Southern Buddhism at the present day, the king of Siam, exercises without scruple his privilege of maintaining a harem.[1]

In the face of this appalling arraignment, it is a pity that, at least out of respect for its noble but misguided founder, the extenuating plea could not be entered that the Buddhist order of monks is doing its utmost to stem the evils it cannot cure. But even this plea cannot honestly be made. The consentient testimony of witnesses above the suspicion of prejudice establishes the lamentable fact that Buddhist monks are everywhere strikingly deficient in that moral earnestness and exemplary conduct that distinguished the early followers of Buddha. Buddhism is all but dead. In its huge organism the faint pulsations of declining life are still discernible, but its power of activity is gone never to be restored. A

[1] One of his predecessors, Chowfa Monkut, who was a Buddhist monk till he ascended the throne in 1851, was able within the short period of eleven years to boast that he was the sire of sixty-seven children. Cf. Anna H. Leonowens, *The English Governess at the Siamese Court*, Boston, 1870, p. 59. Besides this very interesting work, the following are recommended as illustrating the state of morality in Buddhist lands. Étienne Aymonier, *Voyage dans le Laos*, 2 vols., Paris, 1895–97. Robert Knox, *Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon* (in the *History of Ceylon*, London, 1817). Robert Percival, *An Account of the Island of Ceylon*, London, 1805. M. Symes, *An Account of an Embassy to the Kingdom of Ava in the Year* 1795, Edinburgh, 1827. W. W. Rockhill, *The Land of the Lamas* New York, 1891.

human and imperfect work, it is destined to go the way of all things human. The spread of European civilization over the benighted East will cause its inevitable extinction.

Such being the system that glories in the name of Buddha, we need not share the empty fears of a few timid souls who look with alarm on the recent futile attempts to secure a following for Buddhism in Christian lands. So long as the human mind retains its power of discriminating judgment, Christianity has nothing to fear from Buddhism. It will benefit, not suffer, by the comparison. To abandon the wisdom of Christ for the vagaries of Buddha would be as unreasonable as to prefer husks to bread, to turn from the pure stream of the fountain to the fetid water of the stagnant pool, to grope in the night by the flame of the candle rather than to walk securely in the full light of day. Between the claims of Jesus and those of Buddha it is easy to make the proper choice. To Him who is in truth the Light of the world every man of sense will turn, repeating the words of the great apostle, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

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THESES

QUAS

AD DOCTORATUM

IN

SACRA THEOLOGIA

Apud Universitatem Catholicam Americæ

CONSEQUENDUM

PUBLICE PROPUGNABIT

CAROLUS FRANCISCUS AIKEN, S. T. L.

DIEBUS XXVII. ET XXVIII. NOVEMBRIS. A.D. MDCCCC.

THESES

I.

"Nulla quidem theologum inter et physicum vera dissensio inter cesserit, dum suis uterque finibus se contineat." [1]

II.

Minime efficacia sunt argumenta contra spiritualem animae naturam peti solita ex intimo eo nexu cerebrum inter et intellectum vigente quo fit ut laeso cerebro laedatur et facultas intellectual s.

III.

Religionem esse subjectionem Deo voluntariam in cognitione dependentiae nostrae fundatam, ex eis quae in religionis conceptu continentur parumper attendenti patebit; ideoque non solum voluntatis, sed etiam intellectus et cordis actus implicare.

IV.

A vero deficiunt definitiones illae omnes quibus Kant, Schleiermacher, Hegel, Fichte et Mill religionis essentiam exprimi autumarunt.

V.

Buddhismus primitivus, cum hominem ex ente supernaturali pendere deneget, non est proprie dicta religio.

VI.

Euhemerismus, systema scilicet illud quod mythologiam ex historia derivari autumat, impar est religionis origini funditus explicandae.

VII.

Ortum duxisse religionem ab idea infiniti utpote a Max Müller concepti minime admittendum.

VIII.

The attempt of Herbert Spencer to explain all forms of religion as developments of a mistaken ancestor-worship is scientifically unsound.

IX.

It is a mistake to look upon fetishism as a distinct and elementary form of religion.

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[1] Leo XIII, *Prov. Deus.*

X.

Religion is the natural and legitimate outcome of the use of reason.

XI.

The universality of religion can not reasonably be called in doubt.

XII.

It is incorrect to hold with Tylor, Brinton, and other anthropologists that the moral standard recognized by uncivilized peoples is devoid of all religious sanction.

XIII.

Penance for sin can be shown to have been an important element in the religious life of not a few heathen peoples.

XIV.

Non-revealed religions, while upholding the recognized moral standard, have often been a hindrance rather than a help to moral advancement.

XV.

Primitive Buddhism can not fairly be adduced as an example of high morality maintained without religious sanction.

XVI.

Belief in the efficacy of prayer is not at variance with the established truths of modern science.

XVII.

Resemblances in different religions do not always imply identity of origin.

XVIII.

Positive revelation, far from being impossible, commends itself to the unprejudiced mind as antecedently probable.

XIX.

Mysteria religionis revelatae nullum praebent obstaculum validum quin pro vera accipiatur.

XX.

Miracula non sunt deneganda quasi naturae legibusque naturalibus adversantia, ideoque impossibilia.

XXI.

The notion that miracles are not instances of the special intervention of God in nature, but rather extraordinary effects due to the operation of certain occult forces of nature divinely determined to this end from the very beginning of creation, does not merit approval.

XXII.

The evidential value of miracles is not made void by the possibility of demoniacal wonders.

XXIII.

Revelationem primis parentibus factam fuisse e pluribus fontibus eruitur.

XXIV.

There is a fair degree of probability in the view that the legends of widely distant peoples concerning a former golden age are the inherited reminiscences of the primitive Paradise.

XXV.

The tendency to monotheism existing in almost all religions is probably a relic of primitive revelation.

XXVI.

The world-wide belief in the immortality of the soul may be safely taken as a relic of primitive tradition.

XXVII.

The existence of flood-legends in the folk-lore of many peoples is a strong testimony to the historical character of the Bible account of the Deluge.

XXVIII.

The assertion that Judaism derived its eschatology from Zoroastrianism lacks solid foundation.

XXIX.

The positive, internal criteria of revelation, when rightly applied to Christianity, create a strong presumption in favor of its divine origin.

XXX.

The Diatessaron of Tatian bears reliable testimony to the authenticity of the four Gospels.

XXXI.

The apostolic origin of the Gospels of Matthew and of Mark is made good by the testimony of Papias.

XXXII.

From internal evidence it can be made plain that the author of the fourth Gospel was a Palestinian Jew, of the circle of Christ's intimate disciples.

XXXIII.

A critical examination of John XIX, 35, and XXI, 24, is sufficient to show that the author of the fourth Gospel was John, the son of Zebedee.

XXXIV.

The apostolic origin of the Gospels precludes the possibility of their being contaminated with mythical elements drawn from Buddhism.

XXXV.

The theory that the Gospel stories of Christ's miraculous conception and birth are of Buddhist origin is absolutely untenable.

XXXVI.

No serious argument can be drawn from the Buddha-legend against the Gospel teaching of the virgin-motherhood of Mary.

XXVII.

The story of the temptation of Christ has no historical connection with the somewhat similar story related of Buddha.

XXXVIII.

The Gospel story of the man born blind is wrongly taken to imply belief in the Buddhist doctrine of karma.

XXXIX.

The attempt to prove that Jesus was an Essene must be set down as utterly futile.

XL.

Qui miraculis a Christo patratis thaumaturgiam Buddhae ascriptam solent opponere operam casse navant.

XLI.

The miraculous cures wrought by Christ do not admit of the explanation that they are relative miracles only, i. e., effects produced naturally through a knowledge of nature's laws not possessed by His contemporaries but within the grasp of later generations enlightened by scientific progress.

XLII.

Christus Dominus natus est ex Maria virgine.

XLIII.

Ex sui ipsius testimonio Christum verum esse Deum invictissime comprobatur.

XLIV.

The reality of Christ's resurrection is conclusively established by the concurrent testimony of the four Gospels.

XLV.

Even without the aid of the Gospel narrative, the Epistles of St. Paul to the Romans, to the Corinthians, and to the Galatians, which are admitted even by rationalists to be genuine, are sufficient to prove that our Lord rose from the dead.

XLVI.

The religion of Buddha is incomparably inferior to the religion of Jesus Christ.

XLVII.

It is a mistake to hold that Buddhism has propagated itself with greater success than Christianity.

XLVIII.

Ad essentiam ecclesiae a Christo fundatae pertinet auctoritas magisterii.

XLIX.

Christus ecclesiam suam ita instituit ut usque ad finem mundi officio suo fungatur ab omni errore immunis.

L.

"Is sensus sacrorum dogmatum perpetuo est retinendus quem semel declaravit sancta Mater Ecclesia, nec unquam ab eo sensu, altioris intelligentiae specie et nomine, recedendum." [1]

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[1] Con. Vatic. Const. *Dei Filius*, cap. 4.

LI.

Discrimen inter clericos et laicos est juris divini.

LII.

Sacerdotium vere et proprie dictum Christus in ecclesia sua instituit.

LIII.

Verbis Matthaei XVI, 18, probatur Christum Petro apostolo immediate contulisse primatum jurisdictionis.

LIV.

Romanum Pontificem primatum in ecclesia primis saeculis exercuisse probatur.

LV.

Summus Pontifex vi potestatis propriae et ordinariae a qualibet lege ecclesiastica dispensare potest.

LVI.

Licet in ecclesia episcopatus a Christo Domino institutus fuerit, eorum tamen jurisdictio a Romano Pontifice immediate procedit.

LVII.

It is a gross error to maintain that the Christian observance of Sunday had its source in the cult of Mithra.

LVIII.

The monastic discipline of Christianity, while strikingly similar to that of Buddhism, is of independent origin.

LIX.

The attempt to trace certain features of Catholicism to Lamaism is a perversion of historic truth.

LX.

The connection alleged by some between the Essenes and the Buddhists is a pure fiction.

LXI.

Buddhism, far from being an original creation, is in great part a derivation from Brahminism.

LXII.

The edicts of Asoka afford no conclusive evidence of the spread of Buddhism in his day as far as the Greek-speaking world.

LXIII.

It is very probable that the separation of the Northern from the Southern Buddhists was occasioned by the conquest of Northern India by Kanishka in 78 A. D.

LXIV.

There is strong historical evidence in support of the tradition that the Apostle Thomas evangelized Parthia, Bactria and Northwest India.

LXV.

The Jamalgiri sculptures point unmistakably to the presence of Christian influences in the Panjab as early as the fifth century.

LXVI.

The Nestorian monument of Si-ngan-fu affords incontestable proof of the presence of Christianity in China in the first half of the seventh century.

LXVII.

Cultus hyperduliae beatae Mariae virgini exhibitus rectae rationi principiisque revelatis omnino convenit.

LXVIII.

Veneratio, quae imagini Christi crucifixi juxta praxim ecclesiae solet exhiberi, procul dubio legitima est censenda.

LXIX.

The Catholic use of the sign of the cross is a characteristic feature of primitive Christianity.

LXX.

The observance of the Lord's day dates from apostolic times.

LXXI.

Christus apostolis eorumque successoribus potestatem contulit peccata remittendi.

LXXII.

Ad sacramentum poenitentiae valide ministrandum requiritur potestas non solum ordinis sed etiam jurisdictionis.

LXXIII.

Contritio motivo caritatis perfectae concepta peccatorem Deo reconciliat ante absolutionem.

LXXIV.

Contrahentes sunt ministri sacramenti matrimonii.

LXXV.

Jus sodalitia formandi quibus conditiones laboris aequiores obtineantur, opificibus negari non potest.

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AND THE

Gospel of Jesus the Christ

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By the

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